

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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## MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

### BOOK V.

#### CHAPTER VII. VISITORS AT DE MONTFORT VILLAS.

AFTER the disagreeable business in which Walter Charlewood had been involved at the bank, Clement insisted that his brother should return and share the family home. It was in vain that Wat rebelled and implored; there was no resisting Clement's strong steady will. "It must be so, Watty," he said. "Trouble and danger have come from your leaving us. Worse shall not follow if I can by any means prevent it. Mother and Penny will receive you gladly. The quiet peaceful home life will, after a while, be much sweeter to you than——"

"Oh, home-life!" answered Walter, bitterly. "I don't care to go back to a home where I'm looked upon as a monster—a foil to your virtue—neither have I any fancy for playing prodigal son, and being cried over by the women." Then, with a sudden change of tone, he whined out like a chidden schoolboy, "I say, Clem, don't make me go back there, old fellow! I'll be as steady as a rock, and I won't forget what you have done for me, and I will keep all square and right; indeed I will! But—but—it's so *beastly* dull at Barnsbury!"

It was all in vain. His rent (discovered to be in arrear) was paid at the dingy lodging-house, and himself and his portmanteau were conveyed in a cab to his mother's home. Mrs. Charlewood was so overjoyed to see her boy once more under her roof, that it is to be feared she was scarcely as much shocked as she ought to have been at the immediate cause of his being there. Clement did not needlessly distress her; but of course it had been impossible entirely to avoid imputing blame to his brother in the matter, nor would he have deemed it right or wise to do so had it been possible. But not even to his sister Penny did he impart all he knew of the extent of Walter's misconduct. Whatever that was, it remained a secret between the two brothers.

For a time, things went on quietly. Walter was cowed by a sense of disgrace. Although Penelope, at Clement's earnest request, refrained from uttering any reproaches to her

youngest brother, the very fact of her unwonted silence and forbearance stung him. He was conscience stricken, and interpreted every word and look as a stab aimed at himself. The little household was peaceful, but sad. Walter's presence amongst them had a depressing influence. There was no longer that candour and confidence in their home-talk which lightens all burdens. Clement usually returned from his office early, but there were occasions when he was detained later. Walter had demanded a key with which to let himself into the house whenever he would; but this his brother had rigidly refused to allow him. Walter made a hard struggle for this privilege, but suddenly ceased to ask for it, and took the habit of going to bed early, as early sometimes as half-past eight or nine o'clock. He professed that the dullness and stupidity of his home-life made him sleepy, and wished he were dead outright rather than buried alive. "But, Wat," Penelope would say, "you are always in such violent extremes. Why can you not go out occasionally and amuse yourself, and return home at a reasonable hour? I would always sit up for you until eleven. I, too, think it is not good for you to be altogether buried alive. But why need you be? It is your own fault."

To such speeches Walter would reply that he was not a child, although Clem, having got the upper hand, tried to treat him like one, and that if he could not come in and go out without being spied upon and lectured, he would stop at home for good and all, and he hoped Clem would like *that*!

Mrs. Charlewood was singularly silent during these discussions; and whenever Penelope spoke to her privately on the subject, would say nervously, "There, love, don't talk about it; let us be thankful that we have got the lad at 'ome again. I know, dear, Clem is very good and wise; but—*isn't* he a bit stern with Wat now and then? Well, there; I dare say I'm all wrong. Don't scold me, Penny; don't, my dear! All I want is to keep peace and good will among you all."

One morning at breakfast Clement said to his mother, "Our little servant has one most singular propensity—she is not generally apt to originate any service, or to do anything in the way of work that she can leave undone; but she keeps the lock of the street door oiled and cleaned in the most wonderful way—the hinges

too. When we first came here the door creaked terribly; now I enter positively without noise. I wonder what put it into her head to do this!"

"Why, Clem!" cried Penelope, "Ann wouldn't think of such a thing, I am very sure. Whoever oils the lock, it is not she; besides, the only oil we have in the house is salad oil, and that I keep locked up in the kitchen cupboard."

There was a momentary silence. Then Mrs. Charlewood said, tremulously: "It is not Ann that oils the lock, dear. It's—it's me."

"You, mother? What on earth for?"

"I—I found it fidgeted me so to have it creaking and grating. I've nervous fancies now, you know, that I didn't 'ave once upon a time; so I just keep it well oiled with a feather, and—and—I didn't want to bother anybody about it."

"Well, you have been uncommonly sly in your proceedings, mamma," said Penelope. "I have never once chanced to see you near the lock."

Mrs. Charlewood appeared so confused, and unwilling to pursue the subject, that Clement signed to his sister to say no more. The matter was thus allowed to pass off for the time, but Penny referred to it afterwards in speaking to Clement.

"It was odd of mamma, was it not, Clem? I have noticed several rather strange fancies she has taken lately, and a kind of secret way that used not to be usual with her at all."

"Her nervous system has been greatly shattered," said Clement. "We must be gentle and tranquil with her."

Miss O'Brien's visit had been a surprise and a break in the Charlewood's monotonous life. She brought the latest news of Augusta and her husband. Mr. and Mrs. Malachi Dawson had arrived in England, and were travelling to town by easy stages, paying one or two visits en route. The elder Mrs. Dawson occupied for the season a small dark stuffy house in a cul-de-sac in Mayfair; and there her son and daughter-in-law were to remain during their brief stay in London before going down to take possession of their own home near East-field.

"Augusta told me to say that she should certainly come and see you," said Miss O'Brien, blushing in delivering the message as Augusta had *not* blushed in giving it.

"Augusta 'as not written to me for a long time," said Mrs. Charlewood, gently.

"She says that she—that you—that her last letter was never answered."

Penelope checked Mrs. Charlewood in a reply, and said slowly, "I hope Augusta *will* come to see her mother. Her mother will be glad to see Augusta."

About a fortnight afterwards, a hackney cab drew up before Number Nine De Montfort Villas. It had stopped at several doors before, and the driver only succeeded in finding the right house by the zealous assistance of a

chemist's boy with a basket on his arm, who, having been sent on a pressing errand in a precisely opposite direction, eagerly embraced the opportunity afforded by the cabman's inquiries to accompany the vehicle to De Montfort Villas.

From the cab alighted a lady in rich mourning robes, with a thick black veil covering her face. She was followed by a ruddy-faced broad-shouldered man in clerical costume, and lastly came forth another lady dressed in a pale lilac muslin of the lightest fabric and most delicate colour, and wearing a close straw bonnet trimmed with white ribbons. The lady in mourning rang the bell, and after a word or two with the little servant, the whole party was admitted into the house, and ushered into the small back parlour. "Missis would be down directly," the servant said, "and so would Miss Charlewood."

The lady in mourning raised her veil, revealing the handsome face of the late Miss Augusta Charlewood. "Good gracious!" she exclaimed, fanning herself with her handkerchief, "how frightfully hot I am. That veil has nearly suffocated me." As she was speaking, the door opened, and Mrs. Charlewood and Penelope came into the room.

"Oh, Gussy! Oh, my child!" cried the former, taking her daughter in her arms. Penelope gave her sister her hand, and bent forward as though to kiss her, but Mrs. Malachi Dawson offering her cheek, Penelope omitted the salute altogether.

"And do you see who I have brought with me?" said Augusta.

Mrs. Charlewood turned round, and wiped the tears from her eyes before she recognised her visitors. "Why, goodness me!" she exclaimed. "Mr. Fluke, and *Miss* Fluke! Well, this is a surprise. 'Ow d'ye do?"

The Reverend Decimus Fluke shook hands with the widow. He was not an unkindly man, and he put a good deal of friendly cordiality into the grip which he gave her hand. The sight of her black gown and altered face moved him to pity her very sincerely. But his voice was as loud, and his manner as boisterous, as ever when he spoke to her. Could he have been convinced that the assumption of a soft tone and gentle manner would have been in this case a real act of benevolence, he would have striven to perform that act. But the idea was a wholly inconceivable one to him. Miss Fluke, I am inclined to believe, was much less accessible to emotions of compassion. She had, as she would have expressed it, "*to save her own soul*;" and that aim she pursued according to her lights with entire singleness of purpose, plunging onward in a straight line, and treading down sensibilities and susceptibilities and delicate little flowers of feeling with as little ruth as a bullock might be expected to feel for the daisies crushed by the plough he was drawing. The "*wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower*" would have appealed to Miss Fluke's imagination quite in vain.

"How are you, my dear afflicted friends?" said Miss Fluke, solemnly. The weather was warm, and Miss Fluke's face was very red, and her simple straw bonnet with white ribbons framed it in an incongruous manner. Her delicate lilac muslin, too, was scarcely in harmony with the very tough and stalwart character of her figure. "My dear afflicted friends," repeated Miss Fluke, "how are you?"

"Pretty well, thank you," said Penelope, coolly, "and how are you, poor creature?"

Miss Fluke opened her eyes very wide indeed. "Poor creature!" she repeated, in a puzzled manner.

"Yes; poor creature. Are we not all poor creatures? I didn't know that you had any dispensation from the common lot."

"No, no," interposed the Reverend Decimus, with obtuse cheerfulness. "To be sure not. Quite right, Miss Charlewood. We are all—one and all—*miserable* sinners. But, alas! all have not our glorious privilege of knowing that we are so."

The little lath-and-plaster house seemed to quiver as the brassy tones of Mr. Fluke's voice rang through it.

"What a horrid place this is!" said Augusta to her mother. "And that bare dreary field at the back! I thought I never should find the house."

"So we thought," said Penelope, dryly.

"Well, Penny, now I really think that very uncalled for and unkind. We have only been in town eight days, and it was impossible to be here sooner. This morning, just as I had made up my mind to make an effort and come to mamma, Mr. and Miss Fluke called. I told them of my intention, and they offered to accompany me."

The truth was, that Augusta, who had not got rid of her sensitive horror of "scenes," had considerably dreaded the meeting with her family, and had gladly accepted the Flukes' offer, thinking that any very confidential or agitating conversation upon family affairs would thereby be avoided. Penelope understood it all perfectly.

"And are you not surprised to see me and Hannah in this great city, my dear friends?" said Mr. Fluke. "You have not yet inquired what brings us hither—eh?"

"Papa is going to preach a charity sermon at the request of an old friend," struck in Miss Fluke. "Papa and my sisters and I have been at the sea-side, recruiting our strength for our winter duties."

The idea thus conjured up, of a fresh stock of vigour having been taken in by the whole Fluke family, was calculated to appal a weak mind.

"We had to pass through London on our way home, so papa has the precious opportunity of sowing the good seed amongst a very low and numerous congregation on the Surrey side of the river, *without* incurring any serious expense."

"Ah," observed Penny, "sowing the seed

for them comes cheaper than giving them bread, doesn't it?"

"And where are my brothers?" asked Augusta, languidly.

"At work," responded her sister, with brevity.

"Oh, ah, yes, of course. I know. But I mean, where do they live? You don't mean to say that there is room for you all *here*!"

"Well, love," said Mrs. Charlewood, "it is close quarters for 'em. But we 'ave just bedrooms enough, with the servant girl going 'ome to sleep. Watty finds it a bit dull, love."

"I should think so, mamma! Poor Watty! With his habits and tastes—and poor Clement, too, of course," added Augusta, hastily, catching her sister's eye.

Mrs. Charlewood's maternal heart had yearned towards her absent daughter, despite the cold selfishness of her letters. Now the meeting had come, and there was a leaden sensation of disappointment in the mother's breast. Augusta made it apparent in fifty ways, that she was henceforth apart from the rest of the family. She invited her mother to come and see her, but it was in a suppressed, dry manner, as though she were undecided whether to be ashamed or proud of the condescension. Augusta shrank from contact with poverty as she shrank from exposing her delicate skin to an east wind. And, to her, her mother's present circumstances meant great poverty. Mrs. Charlewood had most of the material comforts which she needed or desired; but to Augusta, born and cradled amidst great wealth, the absence of luxuries appeared privation. Penelope, with brave self-sacrifice, and it may be with a certain enjoyment in the long unused pleasure of whetting her keen tongue upon Miss Fluke's solid self-satisfied dulness, engaged the visitors in conversation, thus leaving her mother free to talk with Augusta. At length the latter rose to go. The Flukes rose also.

"We have been trying to induce Penelope to come and hear papa's sermon next Sunday," said Miss Fluke, impressively. "I hope *you* will come, at all events, Mrs. Charlewood. You were always a faithful member of papa's flock."

"It's a long way off, isn't it?" said Mrs. Charlewood, hesitatingly.

"Not at all," pronounced Miss Fluke, in her *infallible* manner. "No distance whatever. Papa preaches in the morning, and again in the evening. There is the name of the church written down."

"Well, we will think of it," said Penelope, shaking hands with Mr. Fluke. Augusta lingered to say a word or two to her mother, and then they all went out to the front door together.

The cabman was half reclining on the box, with one elbow supported on the roof of his cab. He had a pipe in his mouth, and was reading a Sunday paper.

"What are you reading, my good man?" demanded Miss Fluke, marching up to the vehicle.

"All right, mum," answered the cabman. He folded up the newspaper, thrust it into his pocket, and scrambled down in a stiff, bow-legged fashion to open the cab door.

Augusta entered the vehicle, and Mr. Fluke stood waiting for his daughter to do the same. But Miss Fluke still remained immovable, with her eyes fixed on the cabman, and one hand fumbling in her pocket. "What were you reading, my good man?" she repeated, glaring at him.

"Where to, sir?" asked the cabman, huskily, of Mr. Fluke. The reverend gentleman gave Mrs. Dawson's address in Mayfair.

"Here," said Miss Fluke, no whit abashed, and drawing a tract from her pocket, "here is a beautiful little story that I wish you would promise me to read in your leisure moments, my friend."

"All right, mum," rejoined the cabman, scrambling on to his box again.

"Take it, my good man; it is for you. Take it, and put it in your pocket."

"Thankee, mum," said the man, looking at her for the first time, as he gathered the reins in his hand, "I won't deprive you."

Mr. Fluke handed his daughter into the cab somewhat hastily, for the horse made a sudden plunge, and evinced an unexpected desire to start.

"I think," said Miss Fluke, with much solemnity, after they had ridden some distance in silence—"I think that I should *very* much like to be connected with a mission for the conversion of the London cabmen!"

#### CHAPTER VIII. CORDA MAKES A DISCOVERY.

A CROWD of people was pouring out of a large oblong brick church in a populous neighbourhood on the Surrey side of Blackfriars-bridge. It was a hot evening, and the faces of the congregation bore evidences of the high temperature within the church. Even the dusty streets and tainted atmosphere outside appeared cool and fragrant by contrast. The daylight had not yet faded from the sky, although the sun had gone down, reddening the haze and smoke of London until he looked like a golden ball cast into a flaming furnace. The Reverend Decimus Fluke had been preaching a charity sermon for the benefit of some ragged schools in the oblong church; and the Reverend Decimus Fluke's name had travelled beyond the limits of his own parish and his own town, as that of a zealous and powerful preacher of sound evangelical doctrine. He was looked upon as a shining light of the Low Church party, and the announcement of his name had attracted a large congregation. It was a well-dressed, well-to-do congregation, assembled from a wide circuit round. From Camberwell, Clapham, Brixton, and even Peckham-rye, the citizens and the citizens' wives and daughters had made long pilgrimages to hear what one old lady called "a good strong sermon;" and, it is to be hoped, also with some design of benefiting the ragged scholars on whose behalf

they were appealed to. But Miss Fluke's pious hope that the good seed would be sown by her father's instrumentality amongst the very wretched population of the neighbourhood seemed likely to be frustrated, for even the ordinary frequenters of the oblong church did not belong to anything like so poor a class as the majority of the inhabitants of the district. The very poor, the real labouring people, did not go to church, or at any rate did not go to that church. The incumbent, an old friend of Mr. Fluke, had invited that gentleman and his daughter to pass the remainder of the evening at his house. Mr. Lubbock, the curate, also an old acquaintance of the Flukes, and formerly of Eastfield, was to be of the party. They all came out of the vestry together, avoiding the crowd. At the gate a close carriage was drawn up, and some ladies and gentlemen were making their way to it across the stream of people.

"There," cried Miss Fluke, "are Augusta and the Charlewoods." The party from the vestry paused to accost them. There were Mr. and Mrs. Malachi Dawson, and Clement with his mother on his arm. When greetings had been interchanged, and a word or two said about the sermon, Miss Fluke demanded to know why Penelope and Walter had not availed themselves of that opportunity of edifying themselves. Mrs. Charlewood looked nervous. Augusta raised her eyes, and gave a little sigh, intended to express the hopelessness of her brother's and sister's spiritual condition.

"My sister Penelope prefers attending a place of worship in our immediate neighbourhood. I am unable to inform you why Walter did not think fit to come with us," said Clement, gravely.

"I'm going to Augusta's 'ouse with her," said Mrs. Charlewood. "She 'as asked me to stay the night there, and Clement will call for me to-morrow."

It was, in fact, Malachi Dawson who had invited his wife's mother to accompany them home; but poor Mrs. Charlewood was eager to exhibit Augusta in an amiable light. The three got into the carriage that was waiting.

"Can we set you down anywhere, Miss Fluke?" asked Augusta, as the servant was putting up the steps. Miss Fluke drew herself up rigidly, shut her eyes very tight, opened them very wide, shook her head violently, and replied with emphasis:

"Oh no, thank you; oh dear no. Not on any account whatever. I never ride in a coach on the Lord's Day. 'Thy cattle,' you know, Augusta. It's expressly mentioned. 'Thy cattle,' and 'thy man-servant,' too, you recollect."

"Good-bye, mother," said Clement. "I will come for you on my way home to-morrow."

"And, Clem dear," cried Mrs. Charlewood, leaning out of the window, and speaking very earnestly, "don't, above all, forget to tell Watty that I shall not be 'ome to-night."

"No, no, mother."

"Remember, love, you've promised."



The carriage drove away, and left the little group standing just outside the church gate.

"If you are going home, your way lies for some distance in our direction, Charlewood," said Mr. Fluke.

Then the two elder clergymen moved away arm in arm, and the curate, with incomprehensible want of gallantry, hurried on to join them. Miss Fluke and Clement were left standing side by side. Under the circumstances there was nothing for it but for Clement to offer her his arm. She took it. If I were to say she seized it, the expression might not be too strong to convey the energy of Miss Fluke's action. They walked on in the wake of the three clergymen, tracking their black-coated figures through the crowd of passers-by. All the world seemed to be in the streets enjoying the twilight after the sultry glare of the day. It was not a quite easy task to steer Miss Fluke through a London thoroughfare. Her mode of progression was uncompromising. She turned neither to the right nor to the left, but pressed on valiantly with squared shoulders. This led to occasional complications of an unpleasant nature, and the frequent repetition of the angry question, "Where are you shoving to?" Presently they lost sight of the three black coats before them.

"I suppose you know the address of the house you are going to?" said Clement.

"No; I do not," replied Miss Fluke, in a firm cheerful voice.

Clement stared at her. The position was not an agreeable one.

"Had we not better press on, then, a little, and try to rejoin your party?" he suggested.

"I know we have to go across Blackfriars-bridge," said Miss Fluke.

It was at least a point to steer towards, and they hastened on at a round pace. They were now in a labyrinth of poor streets. Long lines of one-story houses, their fronts smeared with grime in streaks, like the traces of tears on a dirty face. Most of the doors were wide open, and children swarmed up and down the steps. Men in their shirt-sleeves stood at the open doors, smoking. At one house which they passed, a tall, dark, melancholy man, with tangled black hair, was leaning against the side-posts of the front door. He had a pipe between his teeth, but it had either never been lighted, or had gone out. He stood quite still with folded arms, and they saw him from a long distance as they came up the straight narrow street. When they were within a few yards of him, his eyes fell upon Miss Fluke and her companion, and quite suddenly he turned and entered the little house, shutting the door after him. Miss Fluke stopped short, with a cogitating expression of countenance.

"Now, *where* have I seen that man?" she said.

"His face is familiar to me—*most* familiar."

"I don't know, really," said Clement, trying to urge her forward again. "We had better be moving; it will be so exceedingly disagreeable for you if you lose your friends."

Miss Fluke continued to stand still in a meditative manner. You could not say she looked *placid*; she was always too obviously brimful of latent activity for that; but she appeared as impervious to the fact that she was blocking up the narrow foot-pavement as a steam locomotive might have been. A large dog that had tried to pass her, first on one side and then on the other, now made a rush, and squeezed himself between Miss Fluke's muslin skirts and the wall, causing her to stagger for an instant. Clement took advantage of the circumstance to pull her forward by the arm that rested on his, so they got under way again.

"That dog is going to the house where the man was," said Miss Fluke, looking over her shoulder, and speaking very loud. "Yes; see, he is sitting on the door-step waiting for somebody. Now I *wonder* where I can have seen that man's face! It is *most* familiar."

If it were difficult to steer Miss Fluke through the streets when she looked before her, it became almost impossible to do so when she walked with her head turned over her shoulder. Clement was almost in despair, when he spied a black-robed messenger of deliverance coming towards them. It was Mr. Lubbock, sent back to fetch Miss Fluke and guide her to her father.

"We missed you, and feared that you might not know the way," said Mr. Lubbock, saluting Clement.

The latter resigned his precious charge to the care of the curate. "My road lies in the opposite direction," he said—I am sorry to record—untruthfully. Miss Fluke shook hands with him and walked off with Mr. Lubbock, whom she speedily involved in dire confusion by reiterated and all-embracing questions as to the spiritual state of the poor in his parish.

Clement stood for one instant watching them, and was turning to pursue his own way, when the big dog bounced up to him again, and at the same moment a small hand was put into his, and a sweet voice said timidly, "Mr. Charlewood, won't you speak to me?"

"Corda!" he cried, in surprise. "Corda Trescott!"

"Yes," said Corda, smiling and panting, with the delicate colour changing in her cheeks, "it is Corda Trescott, that you were so good to."

"Are you alone, Corda?"

"Oh no; that gentleman has been taking me for a country walk. He is very kind, and often takes me out when papa has not time to go with me."

Corda pointed down the street to the house where the dog had been waiting, and at the door of which a queer hatchet-faced old man was standing, leaning on a knotted stick.

"This is his dog," continued Corda. "*Such* a clever dog! See, he knows I'm speaking of him; and he knows that you are a friend of mine too, else he would bark at you."

"Do you live in that house?" asked Clement.

He was pleased to see the child, but yet there was a pain in it too.

"We don't live in this street, but close by. That house is where the gentleman—the dog's master—lodes. And who do you think is his landlady, Mr. Charlewood? You'll never guess, I'm sure. Mrs. Hutchins! She and her husband have come to live in London."

Clement was less surprised than Corda had expected. "And do you know, Corda," said he, smiling, "that you have narrowly escaped seeing another old friend of yours? Now I challenge *you* to guess who it was." Corda's face grew burning red, and she cast down her eyes.

"I know," she said, in a whisper. "Yes, I saw her with you. It was Miss Fluke. I hid till she had gone away. I hope it wasn't wrong. Lately I feel so frightened, and my heart beats so when any one talks loud to me, or—or—goes on like Miss Fluke. But I know she means to be kind."

Clement was in no mood to blame Corda's avoidance of Miss Fluke with great severity.

"Good-bye, Corda," he said, taking both the child's hands in one of his. "Or stay, shall I give you into your friend's charge, or shall I take you home myself?"

Corda hesitated for a moment. Then she said: "It would save him the trouble, if you wouldn't mind."

"Not at all, Corda. Kind Fate has ordained that I shall be a squire of dames to-day; but, thank Heaven, there are dames and dames, eh, Corda?"

The child ran on in advance, and said a few words to the hatchet-faced old man. He slightly touched his hat to Clement as the latter passed, and then went into the house, calling his dog in after him. Clement was struck by the oddity of the old man's appearance. He was shabby and grotesque, and yet the manner in which he had saluted Clement had been that of a gentleman. Altogether, he seemed to belong to a class of which Clement had no knowledge. "What is your friend, Corda?" he asked of the little girl.

"He is a second old man, Mr. Charlewood," replied Corda, innocently.

"A second old man?"

"Yes; he used to be a first old man in Ireland. He is very kind in reality, though he may seem cross at first, when you don't know him."

"Oh, he is a stage performer," said Clement, on whom the little girl's meaning had flashed suddenly.

"Yes; but we are nearly at home," cried Corda, eagerly, "and I haven't told you about my seeing Miss Mabel. I went to her house at Highgate, and stayed the day. And I am to go again. And they were so kind to me. And Dooley is very well and strong now. And, oh, Mr. Charlewood, isn't Miss Mabel sweet? When she smiles, I think she is like a picture. Don't you?"

Clement made some inarticulate sound, that

Corda accepted as an affirmative. "I shall tell her," she went on—"I shall tell her that I have seen you. You and she are my two best friends. I'm so glad! I always think of you when I am with Miss Mabel."

"No need to trouble her about me, Corda. She would not care—we never see—I have no opportunity of seeing Miss Earnshaw now. Is this your house? Good-bye, Corda."

"Good-bye, and thank you so very much," replied the child, in a subdued manner. Her quick sensibility had detected that something had jarred on Clement's feelings. She had not entered the sitting-room many minutes, when her father came in from the street.

"Got back all safe, little one?" said he.

"Yes, papa dear. Where's Alf?"

"He won't be home to dinner, nor perhaps to-night. I have just left him, and he asked me to answer a note for him. It's from the music-publisher that Lady Popham wished to consult about Alf. Alf said the note was in the pocket of the old coat he wears at home. You'll find it in his room. Bring it down, my darling."

Corda, delighted to be of use, ran up-stairs, and, taking the coat from the chair on which it lay, put her hand into the breast-pocket. The lining was torn, and Corda's slender fingers slipped down, not into the pocket, but between the cloth and the lining. She felt a paper and pulled it out. "I suppose this is the right one," said she to herself, and unfolded it to assure herself that it was so. The child had not read ten words before she became deadly white. Her hands and her whole frame trembled violently. She stood rooted to the ground, with her bright eyes distended and fixed upon the paper. Mr. Prescott, meanwhile, was drumming irritably with his fingers on the table down-stairs.

"Corda!" he called at length, standing at the foot of the stairs. "Corda, are you coming?" Then he limped up to Alfred's room. As Corda heard his footstep approaching, she thrust the paper into the breast of her frock, and seeing her white face in the glass, she rubbed the pale cheeks roughly and hastily with her hands, to bring the colour back.

"My child, what in the name of fate are you doing? Where is this note?" asked Mr. Prescott, impatiently.

"I can't find it, papa."

Corda's voice was husky, and she panted for breath as though she had been running quickly.

"Can't find it? Nonsense! Here it is in the outside pocket, the very first thing I come to! You are not apt to be so stupid, little one."

"Papa, I'm so—so tired—and I feel—giddy."

He caught her in his arms as she reeled forward. He laid her tenderly on the bed, called for assistance, cried over her, kissed her, and reproached her, all in a breath.

"Come here," he said to the servant who ran up-stairs at his loud vehement call. "Come here and undress her. Put her into the bed, quick, quick. But gently, gently. Don't be

so rough, woman! Good God, she's the tenderest little creature! Ah, Corda, naughty wicked Corda, you have been walking too far; overtaking your strength. My darling pet, it's not your fault. It's that infernal fool of an old man. Why did I let you go with him? I'll get her some wine. There is some of Alfred's down-stairs. Don't stir from her, woman, until I come back. Corda, Corda, my pretty one! My little gentle darling!"

The child was conscious, and tried to smile and thank him. When the servant began to undress her, she put her hand into her breast, drew it out fast clenched, and kept it so. They made her swallow some wine, and she lay very still and submissive in the bed. "Go and write your note, papa," she said. "I am quite well now. I will be very still, but I should like to be quite by myself, please."

"No, no; Mary must stay with you."

"Please not, dear papa! I shall not want anything."

He remonstrated, but she begged so hard, that he had not the heart to refuse her. He could never be obdurate to Corda's pleadings.

"Go to sleep, my little lamb. That will be best for you. Go to sleep."

In the course of an hour or so he came up again, listened at the door, and then softly entered and looked at her. She seemed to be peacefully asleep. But the moment after he had left the room, her large hazel eyes were unclosed, and her pale lips formed inaudibly the reiterated sentence: "What shall I do? What shall I do?" over and over again for hours.

#### FROM BREMEN TO NEW YORK.

Of the many British subjects who go to New York, very few travel in the steamers that start from Bremen and touch at Southampton. The usual route, as every one knows, is from Liverpool; but the Bremen steamers present a scene so unique, that the voyager who has frequent occasion to visit America would do well now and then to choose the less ordinary passage.

Bremen is the port from which emigrants are chiefly taken from Germany to New York, where they are consigned to a commission of emigration, who sends them to their place of destination in one of the western states, Wisconsin being at present frequently selected as a field for enterprise. Many, however, stop at Chicago, in Illinois, which, as the great depot for agricultural produce, may now be regarded as internally the capital of the whole western division of the United States. Here the Germans constitute a large proportion of the population. Even in New York city itself the German element so strongly prevails, that at nearly every store a smattering of the language of fatherland, sufficient for small commercial purposes, has been acquired by the proprietor. In the underground beer saloons, which re-

mind one of the old fading-out "shades" of London, you will hear more German than English; "lager-bier," which is the staple commodity of the establishment, being pre-eminently a German institution.

It may be observed, by way of parenthesis, that a taste for lager-bier does not belong to the aristocratic proclivities of New York. Even at the humble oyster saloons this refreshing beverage is not to be obtained, though the lover of clams and oysters may be supplied to any extent with a detestable beverage which, for some unaccountable reason, is termed "ale." The cosmopolitan traveller, who ignores all prejudices save those of his own country and only respects those when he is at home, should, however, be warned that, to a beer-drinker, the humble lager—which is drawn deliciously cold—is the most grateful and refreshing drink conceivable. Unfortunately for its dignity, it bears a price which, though it would be deemed high in London, is low in New York. A glass costs five cents (say twopence-halfpenny), whereas a less quantity of detestable ale is sold at double the price. Hence the badness of lager's character. The demand for it is great, but the willingness to supply at places not expressly organised for its consumption is small. Ask at the bar of your hotel for lager, and, in the midst of a paradise of ales and whiskies, you will be told that it is not kept there, but that you may find it in the restaurant below-ground, which, in spite of its subterranean condition, exactly performs the functions of an English "tap." But do not flinch or feel humiliated; plunge boldly into the vault, and you will find the lager drawn cold from the cask, and served in one of those German glasses, narrow at the brim and broad at the bottom, a beverage worthy of Olympus. Above all things, avoid the before-mentioned ale, whether it be called Philadelphian or Scotch. Under the first name it is sour, under the second disagreeably sweet and smoky.

The maxim, "Cheap and nasty," sound in many cases, is sometimes sadly perverted. Many an honest Briton is convinced at the bottom of his heart that sprats are more relishing than whitebait, but few honest Britons would venture to express that conviction to any save their most intimate friends.

The proverbial expression takes us back to the Bremen steamer, which we have most unceremoniously quitted. None of the citizens of the United States are more highly respected than the Germans, who are upheld as the type of all that is industrious, loyal, and inoffensive. The German is the model farmer, and to him will the great republic be chiefly indebted for the development of the lands in the Far West. But the German, when he is going across the Atlantic from Bremen to New York in the character of an emigrant, and takes up his temporary residence in the steerage, does not receive in advance one instalment of that respect which he may hope to acquire in the Western world. Most of the ship's officers are German; the head-

stewards and the under-stewards are German; but there is no compatriotic feeling that links them with their emigrant countrymen. The great Teutonic mass that lounges, plays cards, smokes, and does nothing, in the fore part of the vessel, is not recognised as belonging to any country whatever. Its position between the old world and the new is that of the converted Jew, compared by Sheridan to the blank leaf between the Old and New Testaments. It has been a caterpillar, and, by-and-by, if we are not disappointed, it will become a respectable, if not a magnificent, butterfly. But now it is a grub, and is called "Steerage."

Every society has its nigger, though you may not know where to find him. The nigger of London, I should say, would be the Jeames of the late Mr. Thackeray. If you walked arm in arm down Pall Mall with an inebriated member of the working class, well fortified with mail of corduroy and pearl buttons, you might set yourself right with your more credulous friends by declaring that you were a very advanced politician, and that your principles caused you to fraternise with the artisan. But if you selected as the partner of your promenade one of those showy gentlemen, who look so gorgeous with their plush breeches and powdered heads, it is questionable whether you could explain your position in a manner that would satisfy either the lofty subscriber of the nearest club-house, or the hard-working patron of the nearest coffee-shop.

"Steerage" is the nigger of the Bremen steam-ship. Keep above a certain level, and you, passenger as you are, will find yourself in a nice little republic, where the most ideal liberty and equality prevail—a republic where you may combine the easy habits of a court under one of the Stuarts, with the stern independence of a Pilgrim Father. But don't fraternise with "Steerage." You are a passenger, and not an emigrant. Nor must you let your dictionary or your Whateley's Logic lead you to a false conclusion. You may be emigrating from England, or even from Germany, and on this ground you may absurdly, though speciously, conclude that you are an emigrant. Nothing of the sort. You have your state cabin down below, or, being of an economical turn, you have your cabin on the upper deck, and you dine in the saloon. Argal, you are a "passenger" and not an emigrant.

Well do I recollect that, in the summer of 186—, when I crossed the Atlantic in a Bremen steamer, there was a French lady on board of by no means unprepossessing appearance, whose graceful freedom of conduct and native affability of manner would have made her the belle of the assembly if she had confined the exercise of those admirable qualities within defined bounds. But in the largeness of her heart she fraternised with "Steerage," and the terrible fact was whispered about by one of the stewards: himself a German. No sooner was it generally known, than her powers of fascination were gone, her charming little agaceries

were of no avail, and the passenger, differing in caste from the emigrant, looked upon her with a cold glazed eye.

I could compare our little republic on board the good ship Odin, to that of mediæval Venice. By a grand political operation, called the "Sealing of the Council," the people of the Adriatic state were reduced to a nullity, and the Grand Council became the reservoir of political power, whence flowed Doge, Council of Ten, Inquisition, Ministry, and every other Venetian institution. He who was lucky enough to have a seat or an available claim to one in the Grand Council at the time of the "sealing," had secured to himself and family as good a social position as that of any one else in the state. The Councillor of Ten might be the stronger for the time, but the Grand Councillor was a possible Councillor of Ten.

Now, we passengers of the good ship Odin were precisely in the condition of the members of the Grand Council of Venice. The respective prices we paid for our passage divided us into first and second class; but no social distinction was thereby created, and some of the sternest oligarchs were to be found among the second-class passengers. Perchance one or two of our German fellow-councillors might himself have been "Steerage" in his day; for, grand as we were, the mark of nobility was not on all our faces, nor should we have been utterly amazed if we had learned that one of our most aristocratic fellow-citizens had devoted himself to commercial pursuits in one of the odouriferous cellars of Dudley-street in dear old London. Never mind. "Passenger" was not "Steerage" now, and well we all knew it.

The arrangements of the vessel had not a little to do with this perfect equality among the passengers. Below the deck were the state cabins occupied by those of the first class, who, in strictness, had the sole right of entering the handsome drawing-room by which these were surrounded. On the deck was the dining saloon, used by both classes alike, though at different hours. Over the dining saloon, on the upper deck, were the cabins of the second class. Now the upper deck, being perfectly uncovered, and therefore more abounding in light and air than any other part of the vessel, was such a desirable promenade, that, whenever weather permitted, it was the favourite resort of all the first-class passengers, many of whom regretted that they had paid hard cash for a dignity which they had no desire to assume. The mid-ships and the walk in front of the cabins on one side of the upper deck were thus occupied by the second class, to whom they belonged by right, and the first class, who came to them by choice, and, save at night-time or meal-time, the rest of the passenger-part of the ship was deserted. Observe that this place of reunion did not extend beyond the mid-ships and the walk before the cabins on one side. The cabins on the other side were inhabited by a few of the "Steerage," who paid a little more for extra comfort, and avoided the



large black hole in which their less fortunate or less fastidious brethren were compelled to repose. However, they were looked upon as "Steerage," notwithstanding. Where there are niggers—that is to say, everywhere—the mulattoes are lightly esteemed.

On the whole, "Steerage," disregarded as he was by the aristocracy, did not perform the most uncomfortable voyage. Indeed, I strongly suspect that he got through his fortnight, and the wind that blew dead against us during the whole of that time, more easily than many a proud "passenger."

Sea-sickness, with all its faults, is still an occupation, and, indeed, so completely absorbs the mind and body as to render any other occupation superfluous. For the first two or three days, thanks to an unfavourable wind, which kept the ship in a perpetual roll, our time was well filled up; and when we had begun to grow acclimatised to the Atlantic, and the breezes gave, instead of taking away, our appetite, we were pleased at the recovery of an almost forgotten sensation. Moreover, mixed though select assembly as we were, composed of Englishmen, British Americans, citizens of the United States, and Germans, we were new to each other, and had much to ask and much to answer on topics of general interest. Rarely have anecdotes been listened to with more profound attention, rarely have indifferent jokes gone off with so much brilliancy. Folks were on board who had never heard the name of the facetious Miller, and a venerable "Joe," long deemed defunct in the old country, could be resuscitated like a rising sun. A certain amount of "chaff," too, was not only tolerated, but encouraged, and there was a general freedom of discourse which harmonised admirably with the sense of liberty inspired by the aspect of the boundless sea, and with those levelling principles that, inapplicable to "Steerage," firmly bound together us oligarchs of the Upper and Lower Ten. I may instance the case of some oarsmen of Canada, who, having acquired great kudos at some European regatta, were joyously returning home to commemorate their triumphs, and who, in the presence of ladies, used expressions which, though by no means uncommon in the nautical world, were carefully avoided by the late Mr. T. P. Cooke, when he idealised the character of the British sailor. Yet these expressions, which, on shore, beyond the extent of a certain radius to be carefully measured from the Tower of London, would have been as startling as a discharge of musketry, gave no offence whatever. A boatman, who had his cabin in the right place, and dined in the saloon, was still one of the fraternal oligarchy, and was as fully entitled as anybody else to talk in his own way. Indeed, as these same oarsmen had really distinguished themselves in their calling, and were extremely merry, good-natured fellows, affording much diversion to us all, I am by no means sure that if our floating Venice had been provided with a Golden Book, their names would

not have stood rather high on the aristocratic list. Prejudices of caste and sect were utterly annihilated, save that one sentiment which excluded "Steerage" with such iron force; and if "Steerage" did not, by some unfortunate accident, struggle beyond bounds, not a frown under any circumstances ruffled the oligarchic brow. Among the persons who derived pleasure from this state of freedom, none, I am sure, felt more hearty enjoyment than an American clergyman, with puritanical views, who had just "done" Italy, France, and England, and was on his way back to one of the northern cities. He was one of the best informed and most gentleman-like men I ever saw in the course of my life, and he maintained his dignity to the last. Nevertheless, his pleasant smile, and the dry humour, somewhat of the Scottish kind, with which he encountered spirits of a "faster" school, showed how perfectly he could sympathise for the while with the free citizens of a temporary republic, whose utterances must frequently have grated on his own moral convictions. To the more rational mirth of the voyage he was unquestionably the ablest and the steadiest contributor. He could converse fluently on any given subject, literary or political; and his chair, on deck, was the acknowledged focus round which were gathered all the best talkers on board. Let me add, that this effortless display of erudition, intelligence, and amiability was made under circumstances of extraordinary and physical difficulty. Our excellent "guide, philosopher, and friend," was, without exception, the worst sailor on board: never being entirely free from a sea-qualm during the whole of the voyage.

Long before we were half way across the Atlantic our last stories had been told, our last stock of information interchanged, our last joke fired off. Some of us had books, but one cannot read all day; and, in the case of many persons, the sea is unfavourable to study. Even the amusement of guessing what we should have for dinner, lost its zest after a while. The three meals per diem, which we were allowed, were so exceedingly substantial, savoury, and abundant, and withal so liberally seasoned by breezes, which kept the heartiest of us always hungry, that the more thoughtful of our body began seriously to calculate whether a man, who was weary of his troubles on land, and was in the receipt of a moderate income, might not reasonably make up his mind to pass the rest of his life on board the good ship *Odin*, and banish from his mind all consciousness that there was a world beyond. But among the truly admirable qualities of the food, variety was not included; and after a very few trials in the art of permutation, we came back to precisely the same dinner as that from which we started. Guessing, under these circumstances, soon becomes a dull and unprofitable exercise.

Vigorous efforts were made to lull time, and to break the ever-increasing monotony of existence. We boldly assumed the virtue of self-enjoyment, though we had it not. We screwed

up our sympathies until we almost sincerely believed that we were deeply interested in some ship that appeared just above the horizon; and when a black fish—which was pronounced by some of our zoologists to be a "porpoess," by others a small whale—shot through the waves, there was a general rush to the bulwarks, and a shriek that was a most artistic imitation of genuine enthusiasm. A concert in the state saloon, to which both classes were politely invited by the captain, and in which two or three German ladies were the chief performers, now and then consumed an evening, and served to strengthen the paternal tie which united the two sections of the oligarchy into one compact body. A few attempts, too, were made to get up balls; but these did not greatly succeed, as they threatened to lead to something like fraternisation with "Steerage," who danced every evening to his own barrel-organ or fiddle; and this, as I have said, would have been an infringement of the law, in which the whole of our decalogue was comprised. But of all the attempts at pastime, a dreadful game called "ship-billiards" was the most utterly vain. Those who are unacquainted with that horrible recreation—and I trust there are many—may, if they please, picture to themselves a hop-scotch horoscope chalked upon the deck, that despairing pleasure-seekers may arm themselves with wooden spades, and by performing an action that combines the blow with the push, drive into the compartments which are numbered a set of clumsy wooden discs made heavy with lead. The compartments are eleven in number, ten being positive and the eleventh negative, so that if a disc remain in this last one at the end of the game, its number is to be deducted from the amount attained by the occupation of the others. If readers cannot easily realise this brief description, they are requested to pass on to the next paragraph, as the comprehension of ship-billiards would by no means compensate for the slightest mental effort.

The last resource was to promenade to the fore, and look down upon "Steerage" in his own proper quarters. The picture he presented, though exhibiting a vast quantity of dirt-colour, was by no means devoid of interest or variety. The Germans proper were notable for heavy figures, neutral-tint clothes, and faces which wore no expression whatever, but indicated a capacity for sleeping at will, that would enable its owners to get through any number of tedious days without feeling the weight of them. They had also a great talent for doing nothing while awake, and the number of male figures that stood for hours together staring before them, sometimes smoking, sometimes not, but obviously without any mental action whatever, was truly wonderful. Occasionally, a few of them reclined in classical attitudes, lazily playing at cards, and feeling as if sleep would overtake them long before the termination of the game. I doubt whether they played for any stakes; but whether or not, I am sure that nothing short of the most princely winnings or

the most ruinous losses could have imprinted a trace of emotion on their heavy features. Otherwise was it with the sprinkling of Bohemians who varied the mass. The women might be at once picked out by the gay handkerchiefs which they wore round their necks, and skull-cap fashion on their heads, and men and women were alike distinguishable by sharp vivacious features and keen intelligent eyes. There was, indeed, a sort of squalid finery about these Bohemians that rendered them fitting subjects for the imitation of supernumeraries engaged on dramas of the *Flowers of the Forest* kind, and a very small addition of tinsel would have at once fully qualified them for the stage. An Hungarian or two with a fierce Calmuck face presented another type of humanity, and another rarity was the Italian Swiss, who dressed more like a vagabond than any of his fellow-travellers, and was exactly the sort of man that one would not care to meet in a lonely mountain-pass, but whose large flashing eyes and white teeth, rendered visible by a ferocious grin, kept him above the suspicion of dull heavy villany. He might have been a brigand, but he could not have been a vulgar ruffian of the St. Giles's herd. A knowledge of that national Italian game which is played with the fingers only, was the distinctive accomplishment of this variety of the emigrants, and the vivacity with which each player darted forth his fingers and guessed in shouts the number, contrasted strangely with the dull manner in which the Germans played their cards. Nor was their proficiency in a game that required no implements whatever at all superfluous under the circumstances. There were not above three or four packs of cards among the whole body of the emigrants, who numbered from three to four hundred, and continuous play had so completely reduced these from a rectangular to an elliptical form, and had so thickly encrusted them with dirt, that by the time they reached Wisconsin they must have lost every quality associating them with the vice of gaming.

Taken altogether, "Steerage," asleep or waking, dull or vivacious, got very pleasantly through his long days, though he was without the relief of a regular meal: his food being apportioned to him in his own pan, which he took to the cook-house when his appetite prompted him so to do. As for his evenings, they were joyous. He had his regular *soirée dansante*, in which all the constituent particles that made up his aggregate body distinguished themselves greatly, not without the admiration of the oligarchs; for "Steerage" danced much more deftly than his betters.

A superb Atlantic sunset which welcomed our approach to the Western world, and which caused a gorgeous play of colours in the light clouds that skirted the horizon, came as a desirable object, and aroused the enthusiasm of us all, with the exception of three or four lady-passengers, German by nature, who, during the entire fortnight consumed by our passage, perpetually walked up and down the deck, pouring out to each other the

inmost secrets of their hearts with such perfect simultaneousness, that not one of them could have heard a syllable of the secrets communicated by her confiding and voluble friend. To them there was no need of external phenomena; they cared not for setting suns, they cared not for moonlit waves, they looked not to the right nor to the left, but all talked at once from the depths of their own inner consciousness.

Expectation, awakened by the feeling that our voyage would soon be over, revived cordiality among the passengers, and suggested topics for discourse connected with the future, now that we had used up the past. But the sight of land, while it afforded matter for inquiry and explanation as different objects came in sight, relaxed that tie which had bound us all close together. On shore we should no longer have any common interest, and our social status would no longer be the same. Orestes cared less for Pylades, Theseus became cool towards Perithous, while despised "Steerage," having put on his holiday clothes (previously secreted), rose to a level with the rest.

Thus was dissolved the oligarchic republic of the good ship *Odin*.

#### GOSPEL OAKS.

DR. DRYASDUST (as represented by an army of writers in Notes and Queries) complains that gospel oaks, gospel elms, and sermon trees are one by one disappearing. Sometimes, the trees die from sheer old age; sometimes, they are rooted up by farm improvers, factory builders, villa speculators, or railway contractors. Dryasdust complains that there is in every case one link broken between the present and the past: one little centre destroyed around which an old story had crystallised.

These gospel oaks and sermon trees point to a state of society and of feeling which has undergone much change. They were pulpits; they were religious memorials; they were county boundaries and parish limits; they were meeting-points for villagers at certain annual celebrations; they were all of these things by turns, or in different instances. Some of those who read this page may be aware of the recent existence of the Gospel Oak Fields at Kentish Town, London, now almost covered by railways and houses. Far away from the metropolis, there are the Gospel Oak Works, and the Wednesbury Oak Works, in the busy iron and coal district of South Staffordshire. There is a gospel oak at Cressage in Shropshire. There is another, generally known as the Shire Oak, between Wallsall and Crickfield. Gospel oaks also exist, or lately existed, not far from Winchester; and near Leamington; and in the park of Polstead Hall near Stowmarket; and near Ross in Herefordshire. Here and there, instead of a gospel oak, we meet with a gospel elm, a gospel tree, or a gospel bush.

Country people attach a religious meaning to these trees. Thus, the Cressage Oak in Shropshire, supposed by some to have derived its name from Christ's Oak, is said to mark the spot where the first Christian missionaries to that county preached, in the old Druidical days. In Worcestershire, there has been a controversy on the question whether the Apostle's Oak at Stanford Bridge, or the Mitre Oak at Hartlebury, was the scene of the controversy between St. Augustine and the British bishops; twelve hundred and sixty years ago. Of the gospel oak near Kentish Town, the tradition used to be that either St. Augustine or one of the Fathers once preached under the shadow of its overhanging boughs. Up in the far north, there is a venerable fir-tree on the western coast of Argyle, which, before the building of a regular church, was occasionally used as a pulpit; the minister and his flock clustered under its umbrageous canopy in fine weather, trusting to a neighbouring house as a place of assemblage in wet and cold weather. What was thus done in comparatively modern times may well have been the custom to a much greater extent in those olden days when churches were few, and green fields plentiful, and people widely scattered.

It is remarked by the Rev. A. G. H. Hollingsworth, in his *History of Stowmarket*: "When Christianity was first introduced into England, it was customary for the missionaries to select some one known gigantic tree as their place of assemblage. These leafy tabernacles were generally oaks of vast size and stature. Nor is it at all unlikely that some of them were thus chosen because from their gigantic bosom the sacred mistletoe of the Druids had been cut; and they were consecrated by superstitious veneration in the minds of the people as sacred places. Nor were they inappropriate pulpits for the apostolic bishops and priests, who thus in making their shades vocal with the gospel words, proclaimed by their voice the victory of Christ over darkness and idolatry." Mr. Hollingsworth was speaking specially of the gospel oak in the parish of Stowmarket. This measures forty-three feet in circumference at a height of four feet from the ground; it has a hollow trunk capacious enough to contain eight or ten persons. An examination of its rings leads to an opinion that it cannot be much less than a thousand years old.

The majority of traditions relating to such old trees are connected rather with the boundaries between parish and parish, or county and county, than with purely religious ceremonies. They speak of processions, perambulations, and beating the bounds, generally with more or less admixture of pious observances, but principally having in view the marking or indentifying of corners in the boundary lines of local divisions. Near Ross, it used to be the custom, during the annual ceremony of beating the bounds, to read portions of the gospel under the shadow both of the gospel oak and the gospel bush. The Plestor Oak mentioned by White in his

Natural History of Selborne, marked the limit or end of the plestor, playstow, or play-place for the children of the village. The gospel oak at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire, standing in a little retired coppice, marks the boundary between the parishes of Stoneleigh and Baginton. A whole forest of such trees must have been seen by most readers of topographical literature. There are some lines by George Withers, written towards the close of the reign of Charles the First, which touch upon this subject :

That ev'ry man might keep his own possessions,  
Our fathers used, in reverend processions,  
With zealous pray'rs and with praiseful cheere,  
To walke their parish boundes once a yeare,  
And well knowne markes (which sacriligious hands  
Now cut or brake) so border'd out their lande,  
That ev'ry one distinctly knew his owne,  
And many brawles, now rife, were then unknowne.

The "sacriligious hands" were the moody, gloomy iconoclasts of the Puritan body. Her- rick, in his "Hesperides," with a distinct allusion to the Holy Oak or Gospel Tree as a permanent landmark to define the boundaries of parishes or other local divisions, says :

Dearest, bury me  
Under that Holy Oke or Gospel Tree;  
Where (tho' thou seest not) thou may'st think upon  
Me, when thou yearly go'st procession.

Certain collateral speculations were put forward by the late Sir Henry Ellis, who, in his Notes to Brand's Popular Antiquities, made the following comments: "The procession-days or gang-days not only brought to the recollection of Englishmen the settlement of the Christian fathers on the soil, but they also impressed on the memory correct notions concerning the origin and nature of proprietorship in land. These religious processions marked out the limits of certain portions of land, under which the whole kingdom was contained; and in all these the principle of God's fee was recognised by the law of the people. The primitiæ, or cyric scot or church-rate, is admitted as due throughout the bounds, and the tithes also, as charges on the parish; but, together with those admissions, there is formed in the mind a mental boundary; and a sacred restraint is placed upon the consciences of men, that commingles religious awe with the institution of landed right and landed inheritance, and family succession to it."

Some of the ceremonies connected with perambulation or beating the bounds have more of oddity than solemnity about them. It is said that some time ago, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, once every three years, the chief commissioner of the Tyne was wont to catch hold of the first pretty maiden he encountered on the banks of the Tyne, on the morning of the ceremony, and give her a kiss, a guinea, and a glass of wine—which, it is alleged, induced some of the maidens to put themselves in the way of being so captured.

As to the beating of parish boundaries, it is

chiefly a memory of the past. It used to be a glorious sight to see Bumble the beadle, with his retinue of leather-legged and muffin-capp'd charity boys, trudging through the streets, and banging away with their wands at any stones or inscriptions which denoted a parish boundary. There are some odd stories afloat about these perambulations. The Book of Days states that, in some districts, the parish authorities insisted on walking along the whole boundary-line. If a canal had been cut through the boundary, it was deemed necessary that some of the parishioners should pass through the water. Where a river formed part of the boundary-line, the procession either passed along it in boats, or some of the party stripped and swam along it, or boys were thrown into it at customary places. If a house had been erected on the boundary-line, the procession claimed the right to pass through it. A house in Buckinghamshire, still existing, has an oven through which the boundary-line passes; it was customary in the perambulations to put a boy into this recess, to preserve the integrity of the boundary-line. This was considered a good joke by the village lads, who became ambitious of the honour, and were wont to cast lots who should creep into the oven. Once the good wife had a fire in the oven at the critical moment; Tom Smith, the allotted hero, naturally objected to avail himself of the honour under those particular circumstances; the matter was compromised by his crawling over the roof of the oven instead of getting into it. About the beginning of the present century, when a procession of churchwardens, overseers, and charity boys was perambulating the parish of St. George, Hanover-square, they came to a part of a street where a nobleman's coach was standing across the boundary-line. The carriage was empty, waiting for the owner, who had gone into an adjoining house. The principal churchwarden desired the coachman to drive out of their way. "I won't," said he; "my lord told me to wait here, and here I'll wait." Whereupon the churchwarden coolly opened the carriage door, entered, passed out at the opposite door, and was followed by the whole procession. A writer in the work last named, says: "The last perambulation I witnessed was in 1818, at a small village in Derbyshire. It was of rather degenerate character. There was no clergyman present, nor anything of a religious nature in the proceedings. The very name processioning had been transmuted (and not inaptly) into possessioning. The constable, with a few labourers and a crowd of boys, constituted the procession, if such an irregular company could be so called. An axe, a mattock, and an iron crow were carried by the labourers, for the purpose of demolishing any building or fence which had been raised without permission on the waste ground, or for which the acknowledgment to the lord of the manor had not been paid. At a small hamlet, rejoicing in the name of Wicked Nook, some unfortunate



rustic had unduly built a pigsty; poor grunty was turned adrift. At various parts of the parish boundaries, two or three of the village boys were 'bumped'—that is, were swung against a stone wall, tree, post, or any other hard substance which happened to be near the parish boundary."

Beating the bounds is not yet quite dead. In the month of May, in this present year, the newspapers contained an account of a ceremony of the kind, performed in Buckinghamshire, under circumstances which seemed likely to render an appeal to the law necessary. The villagers, not well guided by those who organised the affair, "bumped" boys and men without their own consent, and were even with difficulty restrained from bumping the clergyman himself. At one spot, where the boundary was marked, they dug a hole in the ground, and thrust a boy's head into it.

A characteristic compensation for the rooting up of gospel oaks by railways is the conversion of certain railway arches into dissenting meeting-places. These are called "Gospel Arches."

### OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

#### WILD BOYS.

THERE is a fine Whateleyan passage in Plato, or a fine Platonic passage in Whateley, we are not sure which, that supposes man in this world to be like a creature shut in a dungeon, with only two apertures for light and sight. Through these, and these only, can he derive his knowledge of the outer world. Through these, and these only, come all his glimpses of tempests, sunshine, forests, lakes, seas, valleys, and mountains; but Death at last enters, breaks down the dungeon walls, and lets him forth into a freer and a wider sphere. This is a fine illustration of the soul's expansion from mortality to immortality.

The transmutation of the savage into the civilised man is, however, a change scarcely less extraordinary, and in the last century some philosophical doctors, both in England and France, devoted much time to discussions on this curious branch of moral medicine. Willis and Chrichton in England, and Pinel in France, carried these studies to great perfection. The accidental discovery of two wild semi-idiotic boys, the one in a German forest in 1725, and the other in a French forest in 1798, enabled these philosophers to make some practical and very curious experiments.

In 1725, a boy was found running wild in the woods near Hamelen. Hamelen is a town on the Weser, twenty-five miles south-west of Hanover—our and their George the Second made a good harbour for the place. Hamelen is celebrated for its salmon fisheries, its odorous tanneries, its steaming breweries of rich creamy beer, its distilleries of strong waters, its tobacco and pipe manufactories—those affectionate twin trades. It is famous for all these things, but still more famous for Robert Brownig's delightfully humorous poem of the Pied

Piper, that droll enchanter who, not being paid by the cheating corporation of the Hanoverian town his promised ten thousand guilders for freeing the place of rats, led off all the children of the town into a neighbouring hill and there disappeared with them.

One day, in 1725, that shrewd cynical king, George the First, having got back for a time to his beloved country, was out hunting near Hamelen with his hideous mistresses and motley court. The huntsmen had wound their French horns, and ridden deep into the forest of Hertzswold. There, in a glade, they found and captured a wild boy, supposed to be about twelve years old, who had long subsisted in the forest on roots, leaves, berries, and the bark of trees. His only costume consisted of part of the collar of a shirt. The cynical king and his ugly favourites, all rouge and black wig, gathered round the boy with extreme curiosity, and prettily assumed pity. His costume was not extensive, but what there was of it proved he had once lived among civilised people. Many thought he was the child of some fugitive robber or murderer, who had either died or purposely abandoned him. Others traced him to the descendant of some wretch who had fled during the old devastating German wars, gradually grown fond of the mere animal life, and bred up his children as savages. But the general belief was this: as Hamelen was a town where criminals were confined to work upon the fortifications, it was conjectured at Hanover that Peter (he was christened on the spot) might be the issue of one of those criminals, who had either wandered into the woods and could not find his way back again, or, being discovered to be an idiot, was inhumanly turned out by his parent, and left to perish or shift for himself. In the following year he was brought over to England by the order of Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales, and put under the care of Dr. Arbuthnot, with proper masters to attend him. But, notwithstanding there appeared to be no natural defect in his organs of speech, after all the pains that had been taken with him he could never be brought distinctly to articulate a single syllable, and proved totally incapable of receiving any instruction. He was afterwards entrusted to the care of Mrs. Titchborne, one of the queen's bedchamber women, with a handsome pension annexed to the charge. Mrs. Titchborne usually spending a few weeks every summer at the house of Mr. James Fenn, a yeoman farmer at Axter's-end, Hertfordshire, Peter was left to the care of Mr. Fenn, who was allowed thirty-five pounds a year for his support and maintenance. After the death of James Fenn, he was transferred to the care of his brother, Thomas Fenn, at another farm-house called Broadway, where he lived with the several successive tenants of the farm, and with the same provision allowed by government to the time of his death, February 22, 1785, when he was supposed to be about seventy-two years of age. Peter was well made and of the middle

size. His countenance had not the appearance of an idiot's, nor was there anything particular in his form, except that two of the fingers of his left hand were united by a web up to the middle joint. He had a natural ear for music, and was so delighted with it that, if he heard any musical instrument played, he would immediately dance and caper about until he was exhausted with fatigue, and though he could never be taught the distinct utterance of any word, yet he could easily learn to hum a tune.

Whatever he might have been when first caught by King George and his two sultanas, "the Maypole and the Elephant," Peter, in the quiet farm in Hertfordshire, neither went on all fours in preference to ordinary pedestrianism, nor did he live in trees. He was, on the contrary, excessively timid and gentle, and could be ruled by a child. He was in no way vicious. Before the approach of bad weather he always appeared sullen and uneasy. At particular seasons of the year he showed a strong fondness for stealing away into the woods, where he would feed eagerly upon leaves, beech-mast, acorns, and the green bark of trees. His keeper at such times generally kept a strict eye over him, and sometimes even confined him, because if he rambled to any distance from his home he could not find his way back again; once in particular, having gone beyond his knowledge, he wandered as far as Norfolk, where he was taken up, and, being carried before a magistrate, was committed to the house of correction in Norwich, and punished as a vagrant, who would not—indeed, he could not—give any account of himself.

During his detention the bridewell building caught fire, and poor Peter all but perished. He seemed to have no sense of danger, and could not be drawn away from staring and wondering at the fire. Mr. Fenn having advertised him in the public papers, he was released and brought back to his usual place of abode.

On January 7, 1767, Peter was brought to court, like Caliban, to be seen by the royal family.

Peter, who had the honour of being under the care of Swift's friend, the learned and excellent Arbuthnot, had also the honour of being made the subject of a philosophical essay by the eccentric Lord Monboddo, that old Scotch nobleman, who fervently believed that all men were born with tails, but that the nurses slyly pinched them off to conceal our relationship to the monkey. He says: "It was in the beginning of June, 1782, that I saw him in a farmhouse called Broadway, within about a mile of Berkhamstead, kept there upon a pension which the king pays. He is but low of stature, not exceeding five feet three inches, and, although he must now be about seventy years of age, has a fresh healthy look. He wears his beard. His face is not at all ugly or disagreeable, and he has a look which may be called sensible and sagacious for a savage. About twenty years ago he was in use to elope and be missing for several days, but of late he has been quite tame, rather keeps in the house or

saunters about the farm. He has been the last thirteen years where he lives at present, and before that he was twelve years with another farmer, whom I saw and conversed with. This farmer told me that he had been put to school in Hertfordshire, but had only learnt to articulate his own name, Peter, and the name of King George, both which I heard him pronounce very distinctly. But the woman of the house where he now is told me that he understood everything that was said to him concerning the common affairs of life, and I saw that he readily understood several things that were said to him while I was present. Among other things, she desired him to sing Nancy Dawson, which he did, and another tune which she named. He never was mischievous, but had all that gentleness of nature which I hold to be characteristic of our nature, at least till we become carnivorous and hunters or warriors. He feeds at present as the farmer and his wife do; but, as I was told by an old woman (one Mrs. Collop, living at a village in the neighbourhood called Hempstead, who remembers to have seen him when he first came to Hertfordshire, which she computed to be fifty-five years before the time I saw her), he then fed very much upon leaves, and particularly upon the leaves of cabbage, which he ate raw. He was then, as she thought, about fifteen years of age, walked upright, but could climb trees like a squirrel. At present he not only eats flesh, but has also got the taste of beer, and even of spirits, of which he inclines to drink more than he can get. And the old farmer above mentioned, with whom he lived twelve years before he came to this last farmer, told me that he had acquired that taste before he came to him, which is about five-and-twenty years ago. He has also become very fond of fire, but has not yet acquired a liking for money, for, though he takes it, he does not keep it, but gives it to his landlord or landlady, which, I suppose, is a lesson that they have taught him. He retains so much of his natural instinct, that he has a fore-feeling of bad weather, growling, and howling, and showing great disorder before it comes."

Lord Monboddo had strong opinions, like Rousseau, of the savage being the perfect man, and their life being happier than ours. Dr. Johnson, who visited the eccentric man when in Scotland, ridiculed this theory to Boswell.

"No, sir," he said, "the savages have no bodily advantages beyond those of civilised men. They have not better health; and as to care or mental uneasiness, they are not above it, but below it, like bears. No, sir, you are not to talk such paradox; let me have no more on't."

Poor Peter died in 1785, and was buried opposite the porch of Northchurch church. A brass plate was put up to his memory inside the building, at the expense of the Treasury. On the top of the plate is a sketch of the head of Peter, drawn from a very good engraving of Bartolozzi, and underneath it an inscription giving his history in little.

A wild boy, about eleven or twelve years of

age, was captured in the woods of Caune, in the department Aveyron, in the south of France. He had been seen some time before in the woods looking after acorns and roots, upon which he subsisted. He was met towards the close of the year 1798 by three sportsmen, who seized him at the instant he was climbing a tree to evade their pursuit. They conducted him to a neighbouring village, and put him under the care of an aged matron; from whom, however, before the end of a week, he contrived to escape, and fled to the mountains, where he wandered about during the severity of a most rigorous winter, clad only in a tattered shirt. At night he retired into solitary places, approaching, as the day advanced, the neighbouring villages; and in this manner he passed a vagrant life, till the time in which, of his own accord, he sought refuge in a dwelling-house in the canton of St. Sernin. Here he was retained and taken care of for two or three days, and from thence was sent to the hospital of St. Afrique, afterwards to Rhodéz, where he was kept for several months. During his abode in these different places, he appeared to be always equally wild, impatient of restraint, and capricious in his temper, continually endeavouring to get away.

A scientific clergyman, then conceiving that the education of this young savage might throw some light on Rousseau's theories, and on the moral science of man, sent the wild boy to Paris in 1799, under the care of an old man, who promised to be a father to him if the world of Paris should ever get tired of and abandon him. He was the lion of Paris for a month or so. The great wonder there was what he would say of Paris when he began to talk and observe. At present he neither observed nor spoke, and was, in fact, a slovenly, rather disgusting, boy, subject to convulsive motions, indifferent to everybody and everything, and biting and scratching at all who resisted his will. The excellent Abbé Sicard, the friend of the deaf and dumb, considering that society had incurred obligations to this poor creature that she was bound to fulfil, entrusted him to the care of M. Itard, the physician to the National Institution of Deaf and Dumb. M. Pinel, a physician profoundly skilled in diseases of the mind, drew up a report of the state of intellect he found existing in the wild boy of Aveyron.

Beginning with an account of the sensorial functions of the young savage, Citizen Pinel represented his senses as in such a state of inertia, that this unfortunate youth was found, according to his report, very inferior to some of our domestic animals. His eyes were without steadiness, without expression, wandering from one object to another, without fixing upon anything; so little instructed in other respects, and so little experienced in the sense of touch, that he was unable to distinguish between an object in relief and a painting: the organ of hearing was alike insensible to the loudest noises and to the most charming music; that of the voice was still more imperfect, uttering only a guttural

and uniform sound; his sense of smell was so little cultivated, that he seemed to be equally indifferent to the odour of the finest perfumes and to the most foetid exhalations; finally, the sense of feeling was limited to those mechanical functions which arose from the dread of objects which might be in his way.

Proceeding to the state of the intellectual faculties of this child, the author of the report exhibited him as incapable of attention, and, consequently, of all the operations of the mind which depended upon attention; destitute of memory, of judgment, even of a disposition to imitation; and so bounded were his ideas, even those which related to his immediate wants, that he could not open a door, nor get on a chair to obtain the food which was put out of the reach of his hand; in short, having no means of communication, attaching neither expression nor intention to the gestures and motions of his body, passing with rapidity and without any apparent motive from a state of profound melancholy to bursts of immoderate laughter; insensible to every species of moral affection, his discernment was never excited except by the stimulus of gluttony; his pleasure, an agreeable sensation of the organs of taste; his intelligence, a susceptibility of producing incoherent ideas connected with his physical wants; in a word, his whole existence was a life purely animal.

Citizen Pinel ended by considering the boy's state as exactly analogous to the idiot children at the Bicêtre, and therefore unimprovable.

M. Itard was, however, wiser: he did not think the case by any means hopeless. Still, it was not encouraging. The boy was always trying to escape into the woods. He smelt at everything that came in his way. He tore open with his nails a canary-bird that was given him, stripped it of the feathers as if to eat it, smelt at it with disapproval, then threw it away. There were twenty-three scars upon his body, some scratches and wounds from thorns and branches, others the bites of animals. He at first lived on potatoes and raw acorns, and ate them, husks, rind and all. It was a long time before he could be induced to lie in a bed. The general supposition was that he had been abandoned when he was five years old, and had lived seven years in solitude in the woods.

M. Itard went to work with true French mathematical precision, directing his efforts to five primary points.

Firstly. To attach the wild boy to social life, by rendering it more pleasant to him than that which he was then leading, and, above all, more analogous to the mode of existence that he was about to quit.

Secondly. To awaken the nervous sensibility by the most energetic stimulants, and sometimes by lively affections of the mind.

Thirdly. To extend the sphere of his ideas, by giving him new wants, and by increasing the number of his relations to the objects surrounding him.

Fourthly. To lead him to the use of speech by subjecting him to the necessity of imitation.

Fifthly. To exercise frequently the most simple operations of the mind upon the objects of his physical wants; and, at length, by inducing the application of them to objects of instruction.

The wild boy's petulant activity at first degenerated into a dangerous apathy and a desire for solitude, in order to escape the curiosity and importunities of sight-seers. Except when hunger led him to the kitchen, he was almost always to be found squatting in a corner of the garden, or concealed in the second story of some ruinous buildings. In this deplorable situation he was seen by some people from Paris, who, after a very short examination, adjudged him to be only fit to be sent to Bedlam. As if society had a right to take a child from a free and innocent life, and dismiss him to die of melancholy in a madhouse, that he might thus expiate the misfortune of having disappointed public curiosity!

His indolence, long sleeps, races in the open air, and his frequent and excessive meals, were all borne with patiently by good M. Itard. Sudden changes of atmosphere delighted the young savage, and he broke into mad peals of laughter if the sun flashed out suddenly from behind clouds. Snow made him leap for joy; he would roll himself half naked in it, and devour it by whole handfuls. He sometimes broke into fits of ungovernable rage. Often he would cease to rock himself to and fro, his usual habit, and would sink into fits of melancholy reverie, staring at water, or remaining half the night looking at the moon, breathing hard and snoring at intervals. By degrees M. Itard reduced his meals, regulated his sleep, and made his exercise more subservient to his instruction.

The senses of this wild boy were for a long time in a strange state of torpor. He never sneezed or shed tears. He would squat down at the asylum on the turf, and remain for hours in the wind and rain. If live coals fell from the grate near him, he would snatch them in his hand, and throw them back without alarm. He would eat potatoes burning hot. His hearing was equally stagnant; he paid no attention even to the firing of pistols close to him, but was always alive to the cracking of a walnut, his favourite fruit.

The nervous power being feeble in all the senses, M. Itard made it part of his plan to develop sensibility. The boy was accustomed to the use of the warm bath, and taught to regulate its temperature himself. The use and value of clothing was taught him by his being exposed to the cold within the reach of his clothes, until he found out the method of putting them on himself.

M. Itard says that he then roused the susceptibilities of joy and anger. To use his own words:

"I provoked the latter, only at distant intervals, in order that the paroxysm might by that means be more violent, and always be attended with a plausible semblance of justice. I sometimes remarked that, at the moment of his most violent indignation, his understanding

seemed to acquire a temporary enlargement, which suggested to him some ingenious expedient for freeing himself from disagreeable embarrassment."

The poor boy was as easily delighted as he was impassioned. A ray of the sun, received on a mirror, reflected in his chamber, and thrown on the ceiling; a glass of water, which was made to fall, drop by drop, from a certain height on the end of his fingers whilst he was bathing; and even a little milk, contained in a wooden porringer which was placed at the further end of his bath and which the oscillations of the water moved about, excited in him lively emotions of joy, which were expressed by shouts and the clapping of his hands. These were very nearly all the means necessary in order to enliven and delight, often almost to intoxication, this simple child of nature.

As the wild boy advanced in civilisation, he began to inherit its drawbacks. He caught violent colds, and, to his horror and dismay, began to sneeze. His first sneeze brought on a fit.

M. Itard's next endeavour was to create in this poor boy the vilum corpus of Parisian philosophy—new wants, trusting that new wants would bring new ideas. Toys were given him; but instead of interesting, they only vexed him, and he sought every opportunity to hide or destroy them. They seemed to make him think, and thinking, or rather trying to think, gave him pain. The kind but rather tormenting tutor then tried to rouse his memory and attention by putting a chesnut under one of three silver goblets, and playing at thimble-rig changes with them. These changes he was quick in detecting. For all sweetmeats and delicate food the Aveyron savage entertained an insurmountable aversion. In vain the philosopher tried to inspire him with a dangerous liking for strong liquors and highly spiced dishes; but lentils and such favourite food were rewards that could induce him to go anywhere and do anything. His great delight was being driven out into the country; but the hills and woods of Montmorency roused even in a short visit all his former savage restlessness and desire for liberty. His walks were, therefore, afterwards restricted to the gardens of the Luxembourg and the grounds of the Observatory.

To his governess the young savage displayed great affection. M. Itard says:

"He never leaves her without evident uneasiness, nor ever meets her without expressions of satisfaction. Once, after having slipped from her in the streets, on seeing her again he burst into a flood of tears. For some hours he still continued to show a deep-drawn and interrupted respiration, and a pulse in a kind of febrile state. Madame Guerin having then addressed him in rather a reproachful manner, he was again overwhelmed with tears. The friendship which he feels for me is much weaker, as might naturally have been expected."

We should have been strongly inclined to



think so, considering the persecuting though sensible mode of education adopted by M. Itard.

In leading the wild boy to the use of speech, M. Itard was far from successful. Finding he had a preference for the vowel O, the tutor gave the boy the name of Victor, to which he always came. After great difficulty he was taught the word lait; but he used it for everything, and generally to show pleasure at anything. He next learnt the use of the liquid l, lia, which he caught from the name of Julia, a little daughter of his governess, to whom he seemed attached. His last and final acquisition was the exclamation "O Dieu!" which he learnt from Madame Guerin, his governess. He pronounced it "O Diie!" In signs to express his wants, he was, however, quite a pantomimist. His conduct to the often impertinently curious Parisians who visited him, was droll from its extreme sincerity:

"A great number of the curious know how, with more natural frankness than politeness, he dismissed them, when fatigued with the length of their visits; he presents to each of them, and yet without a countenance of contempt, their came, gloves, and hat, pushes them gently towards the door, which afterwards he violently shuts upon them."

M. Itard's succeeding effort was to follow out Sicard's plan of deaf-and-dumb education, and to show the boy the connexion between words and objects. He drew keys, scissors, &c., on a black board, and hung below the outline drawings the objects indicated. Victor was then taught to select them when transposed, and rearrange them in proper order. This not succeeding very well, M. Itard tried pieces of coloured paper, and these Victor soon learned to associate with the objects on which they had at first been placed. At last the temper of the savage broke out as the tasks grew more numerous and complicated. He threw down the pasteboards, and ran to his bed in a fury. From there he was always again led back to his work.

"My perseverance," says the preceptor, "lasted only a few days; for it was at length overcome by the unconquerable independence of his spirit. His emotions of anger became more frequent, more violent, and resembled the paroxysms of rage similar to those of which I have already spoken; but with this striking difference, that the effects of his passion were now less directed towards persons than things. He would, when he was in this humour, gnaw the bed-clothes, even the mantelpiece, throwing about in his chamber the fire-irons, the cinders, and the burning coals, and would conclude the scene by falling into convulsions, which seemed to be of a nature somewhat analogous to those of epilepsy—a complete suspension of the sensorial functions. I was obliged to yield when things had arrived at this pitch; and yet my acquiescence had no other effect than to increase the evil; its paroxysms became more frequent, and liable to be renewed by the least opposition, often even without any evident cause."

M. Itard felt that the crisis had arrived. Once victorious, the boy would be for ever untam-

able. He resolved to follow the plan of the great Boerhaave, at the Harlem madhouse. The boy had a great terror of looking down from a height. In one of his paroxysms, before epilepsy had supervened, M. Itard says:

"I suddenly opened the window of the chamber, which was on the fourth story, looking down upon a rough pavement. I approached him with every appearance of fury, and seizing him forcibly, I held him out of the window, his face directly turned towards the bottom of this precipice. When, after some seconds, I withdrew him from this situation, he appeared pale, covered with a cold sweat, his eyes moistened with tears, and still agitated with a slight trembling, which I attributed to the effects of fear. I then took him again to his boards; I made him gather up his scattered papers, and insisted that they should be all replaced. All this was executed, although, it must be confessed, in a slow and rather slovenly manner. He did not, however, venture to betray any impatience. After it was done, he threw himself on his bed, and burst into a flood of tears."

The boy's indignation after this took only the simpler form of murmurs and tears. Victor, once subdued, soon learned to arrange his pasteboard alphabet, to combine words, and to distinguish many of the objects which they stood for. At last, when he went for his daily walk to one citizen Lemert's, where he used to have milk given him, he would secrete the letters L a i t, and, when he got there, arrange them on the table to imply his want.

From these experiments, valuable as the first step in that philanthropic and excellent task, the education of idiots, M. Itard, a disciple of Locke and Condillac, drew the following deductions, utterly opposed to the wild and poetical theories of Rousseau:

"1. That man is inferior to a great number of animals in a pure state of nature, a state of vacuity and barbarism, although it has been unjustly painted in colours the most attractive; a state in which the individual, deprived of the characteristic faculties of his species, drags on miserably, equally without intelligence and without affections, a life that is every moment subject to danger, and confined to the bare functions of animal nature.

"2. The next conclusion that may be drawn is, that moral superiority which has been said to be *natural* to man, is merely the result of civilisation, which raises him above other animals by a great and powerful stimulus. This stimulus is the predominant sensibility of his species, the essential property from which flow the faculties of imitation, and that unintermitting propensity which forces him to seek, in new wants, new sensations.

"3. It may be observed that this imitative power, adapted for the education of all his organs, and especially for the acquisition of speech, although very energetic and active during the first years of life, is rapidly enfeebled by the progress of age, insulation, and all the other causes which tend to deaden the nervous

sensibility. From whence it results that the articulation of sounds, which is beyond contradiction, of all the effects of imitation, the most inconceivable and advantageous result, cannot fail to experience innumerable obstacles at an age which has not advanced beyond the period of infancy.

"4. We may likewise remark, that there exists equally with the savage the most insulated, as with the citizen raised to the highest point of civilisation, an uniform proportion between their ideas and their wants; that their continually increasing multiplicity, in a state of polished society, ought to be regarded as one of the grand instruments for producing the development of the human mind; so that we may be allowed to lay it down as a general proposition, that all the causes, whether accidental, local, or political, which tend to augment or diminish the number of our wants, contribute of necessity to extend or to contract the sphere of our knowledge, and the empire of the sciences, of the fine arts, and of social industry."

What height of mental development the wild boy of Aveyron reached at last, we have not been able, after some research, to ascertain. If the poor boy did not become a Solomon or a Shakespeare, he at least proved a capacity for development, always latent in the minds of idiots.

#### THE NORTH POLE QUESTION.

ONE of these days, Brigham Young, if he has still sufficient stamina remaining, may have to make another exodus, and, leaving the Salt Lake, migrate to some more secluded spot. If he has not already made his choice, we seriously recommend him to try the North Pole—and not to be too long about it, either, lest the lodgings to let there should be previously engaged. But the Mormon leader is not the man to *hire*; he prefers *taking* a residence in fee simple. In that case, despatch is still more urgent; for the French are threatening to plant the tricolour flag on the northern extremity of the terrestrial axis.

Both the Poles have attracted much attention of late. The close of the last century left them labouring under the accusation of being masses of ice, concentrations of cold, defying the boldest discoverer to reach them. They concealed no secret, it was thought, for their condition was plain. That condition could be no other than a homogeneous and unchanging state of glacier and snow, ice piled upon ice, drift heaped over drift, frost binding still faster the effects of previous frost. Zero of Fahrenheit was their mildest temperature. Water would be a thing unknown, if there were any living creature there to know. Learned men, indeed, wished those extreme points to be reached, as curiosities of physical geography; but travellers cared little about reaching them (the practical worthlessness of any North-West Passage being ascertained), convinced of their being uninhabitable.

Of late years a change has come over the spirit of the Polar dream. Extenuating circumstances have been successively discovered which have led to a more favourable opinion of the slandered regions, Antarctic as well as Arctic. It was remembered, too, that the gifts of Providence are remarkable for their balance and compensation; that the Great Creator of all things has made nothing in vain; that an apparent and obvious evil is often made up for, by unsuspected good and unforeseen advantages; that hurricanes purify a pestilential atmosphere; that a sterile soil may hide mineral wealth; that equatorial heats mature invaluable products; that cold countries are exempt from many insect, and almost all reptile, plagues. If so, where is the impossibility, or even the improbability, that behind and within the icy barrier with which we are acquainted, there may exist some accessible tract of sea or land of which as yet we are ignorant?

The area included by the Antarctic circle, equalling in extent one-sixth part of the whole land surface of our planet, has had its character immensely raised by the publication of Maury's *Physical Geography of the Sea*.

Southern explorers, as far as they have penetrated within its limits, tell us of high lands and mountains of ice. Ross, who went the furthest of all, saw volcanoes burning in the distance. The belt of ocean that encircles our globe on the Polar side of 55 degrees south, is never free from icebergs. They are found in all parts of it all the year round. Many of them are miles in extent and hundreds of feet in thickness. The nursery for the bergs, to fill such a field, must be enormous. And such a nursery cannot be on the sea, for icebergs require to be firmly fastened to the shore until they attain full size. They, therefore, in their mute way, are evidence of Antarctic shorelines of great extent—of deep bays where they may be formed, and of lofty cliffs whence they may be launched.

Again: it seems to be a physical necessity with our planet, that land should not be antipodal to land. Except a small portion of South America and Asia, land is always opposite to water. Only one twenty-seventh part of the land on earth is antipodal to land. Now, the belief is that, on the Polar side of 70 degrees north, we have mostly water, and not land. On the other hand, "there is now no doubt," says Dr. Jilek, in his *Lehrbuch der Oceanographie*, "that around the South Pole a great continent is spread, mainly within the Polar Circle."

Not only is the Antarctic continent considered proven, but there are facts that indicate that the climate is mild—mild by comparison—within the Antarctic Circle. Those facts and circumstances are, a low barometer, a highly rarefied atmosphere, and strong winds from the north. We have not space here to deduce the consequences which follow from these undisputed facts; but the winds were the first to whisper the news that the Antarctic winters

were unlike the Arctic in respect to their rigour. Within the Antarctic Circle, the winds bring air which has swept over water for hundreds of leagues in all directions. Now, the aqueous vapour which the air carries with it, is one of the most powerful modifiers of climate known. By simply sending moist air to the top of snow-capped mountains, condensing its moisture, and bringing it down to the surface again, it is made *hot*. Although, by going up, the air be cooled, it is at the same time expanded, and receives, as sensible heat, the latent heat of its vapour. Being brought down to the surface again, and compressed by the whole weight of the barometric column, it is hotter than it was before, by the amount of heat received from its vapour.

We have only to suppose that air, charged with vapour, has to cross, before arriving at the place of Polar calms, an Antarctic mountain range, whose summits are pushed up high into the regions of perpetual snows—and we can easily conceive the modifications of climate that would thence ensue. The Antarctic climate *must* be comparatively mild. Therefore, pleads Maury enthusiastically, Antarctic exploration merits favourable consideration among all nations.

An expedition is being prepared which will not be content, it says, with the shortcomings of Parry, Franklin, and the rest, but which sets out with the determination of reaching the Pole itself, and of not being satisfied until it gets there. It will start, under the patronage of the Paris Geographical Society, as soon as the necessary funds have been subscribed—towards which the Emperor of the French has already contributed the handsome sum of two thousand pounds.

The author of the project, M. Gustave Lambert, a French hydrographer trained in the Polytechnic School, expects to solve the problem by taking the route of Behring's Strait (the sea-channel which separates Asia from America), instead of proceeding, like most other Arctic explorers, by Davis's Strait and Baffin's Bay. For this he gives his reasons in a lucid pamphlet, "*La Question du Pôle Nord*." Moreover, M. Lambert's conviction of the possibility of reaching the North Pole is based neither on a caprice of imagination, which has made the wish the father to the thought, nor on a scheme worked out in his study, but by a laborious examination on the spot, of the routes by which the Pole may be arrived at.

He regards the matter in hand under two distinct aspects: first, there is the scientific question; secondly, the practical question.

At the outset, it is impossible to neglect certain considerations touching the temperature of the Polar regions, although they may be called pure theory. An Italian geometer—the late Signor Pland—made calculations which are looked up to as authority. M. Lambert, not being able to consult them, investigated the matter for himself, with what he considers complete success. He has determined, he says, the

simple laws which govern "insolation," or the quantity of heat thrown by the sun upon different spots of the globe in different latitudes at different hours of the day and in different seasons. Without entering into technical details, a few of the most striking conclusions may be mentioned.

The "power or degree of insolation" at any spot, at a given moment, depends on the angle formed by a vertical line at that spot with a line drawn from it to the sun. This angle is called the zenithal distance. The "power of insolation," however, must not be confounded with the thermometrical effect which is its consequence, but whose intensity depends on a number of other causes—on the nature, for instance, of the atmospheric stratum which envelops the earth like a mantle of down.

The integral calculus enabled M. Lambert to find the mean power of insolation for every day. After long wanderings in an algebraic labyrinth, he discovered simple rules, giving him sets of figures, a glance at which shows that they explain themselves, rendering all commentary needless. A few of the facts the figures tell us are these:

Towards the 22nd of June—the time of the summer solstice—the power of insolation is greater and greater as we proceed from the Arctic Circle up to the Pole, *where it is noon all day long*. The importance of this fact will become apparent when we remember that, *at that time of the year*, the sun throws as much heat on the North Pole as on places situated in the latitudes of 59 degrees north and 25 degrees south: that is to say, as much as in Stockholm and Christiania in the northern hemisphere, and on the Canary Islands in the southern, *at the same time of year*. That calculation, however, does not imply that the midsummer temperature of the North Pole is the same as the temperature at 59 degrees north and 25 degrees south at the same date; because in the latter cases a great amount of heat has been already stored. Travellers will tell you something about the summer temperature of Stockholm and the winter climate of Teneriffe. It is not supposed that the Polar climate at any season resembles them. But the figures are unquestionably curious and significant.

About the 22nd of May and the 22nd of July the degrees of insolation, equal to that of the Pole, are found at 66 degrees north and 33 degrees south: say in an Iceland summer and a Cape of Good Hope winter. About the 22nd of April and the 22nd of August they are 78 degrees north and 57 degrees south, corresponding to a Spitzbergen summer and a Cape Horn winter. Finally, at the equinoxes, about the 22nd of March and the 22nd of September, the North Pole receives no heat. On the contrary, it loses by radiation that which it had absorbed during the summer months. These figures, however, are held to prove that the Polar Sea is not constantly covered with a coating of perennial ice, but that, during the sunshiny season, it is possible for ships to navigate it.

In 1827, Captain Parry and Lieutenant Ross,

believing in the existence of a continuous icy crust, attempted to reach the Pole in sledges, by starting from the north-west of Spitzbergen. Their great moral and physical energy were, unfortunately, exerted in vain; the drifting of the ice caused them to lose every inch of the progress they made. They went backward while advancing forward. But for this circumstance, the space they travelled over was sufficient to bring them to the Pole. There consequently existed a strong current running from north to south, with a sufficient depth of water to float large icebergs.

The very failure of Parry's attempt is one of the most convincing proofs of an open Polar Sea, since it demonstrates a strong current in a southerly direction. An ocean current cannot issue from land. It may sweep round a promontory, follow the inflections of a coast, or be split in two by an island or a cape; but it cannot flow out of a solid wall. Towards the South Pole, where an Antaretic continent exists, the only voyage which merits serious consideration—Ross's—mentions no current running from the south to the north. Parry, in his report, expresses regret that he did not try to get his ship through the fissures and gaps in the field of ice which carried his sledges southward, while they were pushing to the north.

Icebergs have also their tale to tell. An iceberg is a glacier set afloat. When a coast presents slopes suitable for the formation of glaciers (which requires an inclination neither too steep nor too flat), the accumulated snow and ice eventually form a compact mass. The infiltrations between this and the surface of the soil, convert the latter into a perfect slide, and the glacier is launched from the cliff into the water, exactly like a ship from the stocks. If the chain of the Alps, for instance, were surrounded by a sea, it is certain that that sea would be bordered by a colossal framework of ice similar to that which girdles the South Pole, and also to that which fringes Greenland, and is found along the coasts of the extreme north of Europe.

The specific gravity of floating ice causes the depth of the portion immersed, to be about double the height which appears above water; but with large icebergs, in consequence of the mode of their formation and the considerable admixture of stones and sand, the respective depths of emersion and immersion may be taken in the proportion of one to six, instead of one to three. Consequently, the enormous icebergs which tower a hundred yards above the water's edge, may be reckoned to have a total altitude of six or seven hundred yards. It is evident that the water in which such colossal icebergs float, must be deep.

When, on the contrary, ice is formed on the spot, on the surface of the sea, by the accumulation of broken-up fields of ice and snow—a curious spectacle to see, for those who know how to use their eyes—such ice cannot attain any great altitude; on the other hand, it extends itself over vast superficial areas. The

presence, therefore, of lofty permanent ice at any point, attests the neighbourhood of glacier-forming land; whereas ice of great superficial extent, but of trifling altitude, implies the existence of a vast open sea. If tall icebergs be mingled with these low fields of ice, they are brought there by currents, sometimes from a considerable distance. They may be compared to vessels left to take their own course, and running ahead before the prevailing wind.

Now, in the Arctic Ocean, to the north of Behring's Strait, the only ice seen does not rise more than a yard or two above the surface of the water, while its extent is sometimes several miles square. This announces a vast open sea without any land, except stumpy islets, such as Herald Island and Plover Island, the last known summits which rise above the surface of the Polar Sea.

On the other hand, round the South Pole, Ross found and traversed a girdle of ice of colossal altitude, indicating (together with the absence of currents to the north) glacier-producing land, and probably a compact and mountainous continent. It follows that—land being less favourable than water to the transformation of heat of insolation into thermometrical heat—the South Pole ought to be colder than the North, in spite of the theoretical equality of their insolation.

A glance at the map of North America shows that Baffin's Bay separates Greenland from the American continent, and from the groups of islands to the north of it. This bay communicates with several straits, one of which, Smith's Strait, runs almost north and south. In this channel, about a third of the way up and to the right, is Peabody Bay, to the south of which, in Rensselaer Harbour, Elisha Kane, the American navigator, with seventeen companions, passed a couple of winters. In the month of June, 1855, Morton, the most able-bodied of his enfeebled crew, accompanied by a Greenland, travelled directly northward in a sledge. Arrived at the extremity of Smith's Strait, he climbed a steep mountain on its western coast. From thence, on reaching an elevation of several hundred feet, *he beheld an open sea, free from ice.* The scanty vegetation of the spot, compared with that found in lower latitudes, indicated a notable mitigation of the temperature. After planting the American flag on Cape Constitution, the most northerly point yet reached by man, Morton returned to his companions completely exhausted. It was not until the following year, after their second winter, that Kane and his surviving friends were taken on board a Danish vessel, not a day too soon.

In 1865, Captain Osborn, who had already taken part in two Arctic expeditions in search of Franklin, communicated to the London Geographical Society his project of reaching the North Pole. In his opinion, the continuous icy crust covering the whole of the Polar area, may be taken for granted, in spite of Parry's doubts. The supposed open sea caught sight of by Morton was nothing but a large gap or



fissure temporarily opened in the great Polar ice-field. With this conviction, he advised, following the route by Greenland, to sail up Smith's Strait as far as possible, and thence proceed to the Pole by sledge. The space to be so traversed scarcely exceeds six hundred and sixty miles. Greater distances, under conditions of no less difficulty, have not repulsed adventurous explorers. A fresh attempt must necessarily be crowned, sooner or later, with success.

This scheme obtained the suffrages of the Geographical Society; other learned societies, as the Royal and the Linnæan, expressed their cordial approbation. From this stage of a project to putting it into execution, in England, there is but a step; and it would, perhaps, have been carried out immediately, but for Dr. Petermann's counter-project,\* which was to follow the Gulf Stream along the west coast of Nova Zembla to the east of the Spitzbergen group. According to him, the Pole might be reached in that way without having to quit the ship. Dr. Petermann believed in an open sea. His opinion was supported by Admirals Belcher and Ommaney, General Sabine, and Captain Inglefield. This would be far preferable to reaching the Pole in sledges, which mode of travelling would render a hasty return necessary and unavoidable.

In fact, the real object is not merely to reach the spot where all the meridians cross each other—and where, consequently, it is always exactly nothing o'clock—but to investigate natural laws under exceptional circumstances. Although M. Lambert considers a stay of several months sufficient to settle a number of important questions, his great wish is to spend a whole winter at the very Pole, on board a well-provisioned and suitably fitted ship. Such a winter, he thinks, would not prove too much for human strength and resolution. Men possessing solid information, imbued with the knowledge of scientific laws, able to use their eyes effectively in observing what is passing around them (a rarer faculty than is generally supposed), would bring home with them records of great interest with reference to more than one subject of information.

M. Lambert holds that the fixed idea of a Polar navigator should be *to avoid the land*. It is this idea which causes him to persist in preferring the way of Behring's Strait. He undertakes—as far as an assertion of the kind may be allowed to issue from the mouth of man, when we remember the lion's share which "The Unforeseen" often obtains in human events—he undertakes to reach the North Pole in a ship, and the South Pole in a sledge or other mode of land locomotion. In the latter case, it is possible that deep lochs or fiords running into the land may permit vessels to approach within a short distance of the object in view.

\* This gentleman has subscribed one hundred francs towards M. Lambert's expedition, accompanying the gift by a letter of hearty encouragement.

The only hypothesis adverse and disastrous to an expedition by Behring's Strait, would be a continued line of shoals impassable by ships, and accelerating, by the shallowness of their bed, the rapidity of southerly currents. The presence of packed or field ice need not stop the navigator. It can be blown up with gunpowder, and the ship's course traced at will across the ice-field! M. Lambert would regret exceedingly that this idea should be regarded as an idle boast.

Granting, then, a mitigation of cold in the Polar zones, based on the laws of insolation—granting the probability or the certainty of an open sea in the North Polar zone, based on the practical observation of the currents and the ice—granting the consequent possibility of reaching the North Pole in a ship—granting the preferability of Behring's Strait, by reason of the absence of glacier-lands and lofty icebergs—all that remains is to collect the funds necessary to start the enterprise.

To obtain these funds, M. Lambert is trying to form a North Pole Partnership Company, whose advanced capital is to be refunded entirely or partially by the capture of whales. With a disinterested and voluntary subscription of eight hundred thousand francs (thirty-two thousand pounds) paid up, he might set to work; but he has little hope of obtaining so large a sum in that way. "It would be a glorious thing, in truth!" he exclaims. "What a spectacle such a movement would afford! Those French, who are said to be incapable of acting for themselves as a nation, what an example they would offer to the world! But it is too glorious not to be a dream! 'Ha! If it were not a dream, the campaign would be magnificent! I should clear Behring's Strait by the beginning of July—it would be a mistake to penetrate earlier into the Arctic Ocean; by making straight for the north, holding a little to the west, I should fall upon the grand Polar ice-field, after traversing several secondary fields; and unhesitatingly blasting the ice with gunpowder, and sailing over its fragments in my strong-stemmed ship, I should moor a buoy bearing the flag of France on the 90th degree of latitude, before the end of August!'"

#### LOISETTE.

It was a divine May morning when I set out to walk to Summerfield, and I felt more hopeful of success than I had ever done before. I had determined that that day should decide my fate. All through the winter and the early spring I had loved Loiset, and a hundred times I had longed and yearned to tell her so, and to ask her to be my wife, and each time something—I could hardly say what—struck me silent.

She liked me, I knew, but did she love me? Something in her eyes seemed to lead me to hope she did; such eyes they were, loving, and tender, and shy. When I looked into their

soft depths, all the most delightful descriptions of eyes I had ever read used to come across me, "*les portes de l'amour*," "*des bluets doux comme les yeux*;" above all, Calderon's tender refrain,

Sweetest eyes were ever seen.

When she looked at me with those eyes, then it seemed to me I might "tell her all that was in my heart," and take her to mine unforbidden. But the next moment, as if she guessed and half feared my thought, she turned away slyly, and her manner altered, and my heart shrunk back in fear and sorrow.

But at last I felt I could endure this suspense no longer. I must know the best or the worst. If she were to be mine, such a home and such a life as I had planned, and hoped, and dreamt of ever since I first knew her, should be prepared; if she were not for me, then I should leave England, and break away from that and all other home-ties, and try to bear it like a man somewhere away from all that should unman me.

But that May-day, as I started forth and walked along briskly through the up and down lanes of the lovely Hertfordshire country; now, shut in between banks tufted with ferns, over-run with the exquisite small-leaved ivy, crowned with lavish May; now, emerging upon sweeps of hill and dips of valley, crossing commons ablaze with gorse, traversing woodland paths where bluebells spread their sheets of azure, and lingering primroses starred mossy banks; Heaven! how I remember it all! That May-day hope seemed as strong and as full of spring and life and vigour, as my own limbs. I strode on, thinking of the eyes that would look up their soft welcome to mine, and of the warm little hand that I should clasp, and perhaps then claim as mine, my very own, while life should last. It seemed to me that such feelings could not but be prophetic.

"If I find her in the garden," I thought, "I will look upon it as a good omen; I will not let the time go by, I will seize the opportunity and speak to her at once."

I got to the cottage and opened the garden gate. As I stepped inside I saw her, a little way down the path, in her dainty morning gown and broad garden hat, filling the basket that hung on her arm, with flowers, and softly singing to herself. I stopped on the lawn; I wanted to come upon her unawares, and test the effect of my sudden appearance, which I could not do if the sound of my foot on the gravel should betray my approach: thus I got close to her before she knew I was near. She started violently, and the colour rushed to her cheek. The slightest thing would bring it—I have seen her flush at the sudden rising of a bird from the thicket. The next moment she smiled and held out her hand. "Oh, it is you! You startled me. I had no idea anybody was near," and the sweet eyes were raised to mine trustingly. "Won't you come in?"

"Not if I may stay out—unless you are tired?"

"Oh no, I am never tired of being in the garden. So you'll help me to gather my flowers; see, you can reach up to those sprays of honeysuckle; get some of the best, the rosiest, for me."

"Ah, how delicious!" she said, inhaling the fragrance with deep ecstatic inspirations, and she held up to me the blossom that had just touched her face. I kissed the flower; I took the hand that held it; I told her all I had to tell. She stood still, her head bent so that the hat hid her face from me, and I knew not in what spirit she listened till a sigh that was half a sob checked me.

She looked up with a face so full of pain, of pity, of perplexity, of deprecating appeal, that though the hope in my heart sank down, I almost felt more for the sorrow in her face than for that in my own soul.

"Forgive me," she said. "I am so grieved. I ought to have told you. I did not know that you—that you cared for me *that way*. I have been engaged these two years. He is in India, and coming back in August. Oh, you don't think I have been coquettish—that I have been knowingly leading you on to this—*do you?*" In her earnestness she laid her hand on mine, and lifted her face with a tremulous mouth, and eyes brimful of tears.

If I had died for it, I must have snatched the consolation the moment offered—the last, the only one. I drew her on my heart, holding her close, close; and I stilled the quivering of the lips with twenty kisses.

When I released her, she turned her back to me, hid her face in her hands, and sobbed till her frame shook.

"Loisette, Loisette, forgive me! I could not help it! I swear I could not help it, Loisette!"

She shook her head.

"Loisette, think how I love you; think what I feel in knowing all the hope I had of you is gone—gone for ever! Loisette, I am going away, where I can never offend you more. Think that what I have done was done in parting with you for the last time—a last farewell, Loisette."

She tried to speak, but sobs made her inarticulate, still I knew she was bitterly reproaching me.

"Yes; I know I have no right to expect forgiveness. I will go. I won't distress you further. But we have at least been friends, dear, and you cannot think of that, and let me go for ever, without one word."

Still she was silent. I paused and waited; then I flung up my arms, as a man does who has lost all; and with a great groan I turned to leave her: I heard her move, I heard her attempt to speak, and I looked back. Her face was still altered, still covered with one hand. But the other was held out to me, and springing back I took it reverently, and bent my lips upon it.

"God for ever bless you, Loisetle, the one and only woman in His earth for me!"

"And God bless you, and comfort you," she said. "I wish I could have been a better friend to you—I meant to be. Always believe that."

"I will, I do."

And so Loisetle and I parted. The May morning was darkened as I passed through the garden gate again. I turned my steps I knew not whither—away, away, where no one could see me. That was the only wish or instinct I had.

I walked miles, seeking rest, and finding none. At last I stopped at a gate, and leaned my arms on it, and looked blindly over the wide landscape spread before me.

As I gazed, a dull numbness fell on my sorrow, and my perceptions of outward objects slowly returned.

I watched some children gathering blossoms of the May, and thought what a pity it was they should tear the boughs down so, and destroy so much to secure so little. I watched a stealthy cat creeping through the long undulations of the grass, on the hunt for the poor little tender young rabbits. Up sprang a lark, bursting into ripples of song, and my eye followed him, rising, hovering, rising again, pausing, balancing on the wing, soaring up once more, darting away obliquely, resting awhile, but always singing—singing as if he could not cease for his life—then dashing down like a stone and vanishing.

And then my great grief seized me once more, and I dropped on the turf and hid my face in my arms, and cried as I had never cried since I was a boy, when my mother died, and when I thought the world held no more happiness for me.

When our great griefs fall on us, we treat them as boys do bonfires. It seems that they cannot burn fiercely enough; we heap on them everything that comes to our hand in the way of fuel; all the tenderest recollections, all the sweetest hopes, all the most blessed anticipations, that made the joy and glory of our lives—that were as wings, lifting us above the earth we trod on. All these are brought out from the storehouse of memory and thrown on the pile, making it blaze with inextinguishable fury, or what seems to us so, and we feel a bitter relish in the anguish, and seek to make it more, rather than less, as we stir the heap into fiercer conflagration.

Ah me! Ah me! what a miserable fool I had been, and how was I punished!

I had thought, when in my hopefulness that morning I had contemplated the whole affair, that I had been prepared for this possibility, and could bear it. But, strangely, it had never entered into my calculations that if Loisetle were not for me, it could be that she was promised to another; there was the sting, the thing so impossible to endure without every fibre of my heart being torn by the agonies of jealousy, in addition to grief. Loisetle engaged, Loisetle with no love for me, all her love for another! Loisetle thinking of him, writing

to him, calling him all those tender names that lips like hers seemed made to utter! And in August—in three months—he was coming back, doubtless to claim his bride!

At that thought I sprang up, as if a serpent had arisen from the green turf and stung me. I started away so far that it was not till dark that, utterly worn out and exhausted, I reached home. I shall never forget that night, nor the waking in the morning, after a couple of hours' dead sleep.

That day I wrote to my cousin, Sir Edward Haldane, who had just been appointed governor of New Brunswick, to offer myself as his private secretary: a post he had suggested my taking when his nomination to the place had first been talked of. The answer came. He would be delighted; in less than a fortnight I left England.

"I am so grieved," Mrs. Hamilton had written before this, "so grieved in every way." I had not been wrong, then, in fancying I had had her good wishes. "I should have been so glad to have bidden you God speed by word of mouth before you went, but I feel I ought not to ask you to come. Anyway, you have our best wishes, now and ever." Not a word from Loisetle. Well, better so. What could she say?

I often look back now on my sojourn in that black miserable raw colony, ice-bound for half the year, sun-scorched for a few weeks, with something like a shudder.

The great cold staring barrack of a Government House, with its flat unshaded gardens; the unpicturesque village that was the seat of government, and prided itself accordingly; the country that was nothing but dense forest, bare clearing, studded with blackened stumps or quaking morass! The interminable winter, white, still, silent, fettered with a frost that was unrelenting as death, that chilled the blood and nipped the flesh into blains, and checked the current of life in the veins of childhood, of age, and of all tender beings!

Oh, the desolation of those winter forests! No tongue can tell it! No breeze, no voice of bird, no rustle of leaf, no colour; a broad white floor, a hard blue roof, black stiff iron trees standing up motionless and stark. All so like my own life in desolateness! only this nature felt no pain!

I stayed there till the sickly tardy spring, often driven back by fresh snow-falls, came to loosen the spell that winter had laid on the suffering land, and then I resolved to bear it no longer, and, come what might, to return to England, and learn tidings of Loisetle. It seemed to me that anything would be more endurable than this dead silence regarding her.

So I turned my back on New Brunswick for evermore, and reached England in March; March, wild and gusty, but at least alive with birds singing, and grass and buds upshooting in field and hedgerow.

I went at once into Hertfordshire. I dared not go to Mrs. Hamilton's; I dared not ask

anything about the family, lest I should learn what I had come there to know.

I wandered about among the lanes where we used to wander, hoping, dreading, longing, oh, how intensely! At last I came upon Loisetette and her sister. I did not meet them, but a turn of the road brought me in sight of them, walking slowly before me. Loisetette, Loisetette! Just as of old, the undulating figure, the head now bent pensively, now poised lightly on the white flexible throat, the shining masses of hair coiled below the quiet little black hat. O Loisetette, Loisetette! How my heart went out to you! Loisetette, my love! Loisetette, my darling!

I hastened my steps: I *must* see her once more, must look into her eyes, must hear the tones of her voice, let the cost be what it would.

As I approached, she turned with a start, a look half expectant, half alarmed; she felt who was coming, and the blood rushed over face and neck and brow. Mrs. Hamilton, following her sister's movement, was the first to speak; she came forward, both hands extended, with joyous welcome; then Loisetette greeted me with shy kindness, passed to the other side of her sister, and walked on silently: while Mrs. Hamilton questioned me as to my travels, my movements, my plans.

"You'll come and see us, you will promise? I know you are a man of your word, and that if you promise, you will keep your word. Come and dine to-morrow, will you?"

I promised. I could not be more miserable than I was, and I must learn all I wanted to know. But I would not go to dinner; I remembered too well the last time I had dined there, so I said I would go in the morning.

When I entered the drawing-room, what a rush of memories at sight of the familiar place, of the two women sitting by the fire as they had a year ago—all but I, apparently unchanged!

I know not how it all came about, but in a few minutes I found myself making one in the circle as of old. I could not speak. Loisetette, too, was silent. Mrs. Hamilton talked for us all.

Presently she glanced at the clock on the mantelpiece. "Three already! You *must* excuse me. Dear! I shall barely be in time to meet Mrs. L. at the station. You won't go, or I shall think you are offended. When shall we see you again? Settle it with Loisetette. Good-bye. No, à revoir!" And she was gone, and Loisetette and I were sitting side by side, silent.

Loisetette was sitting, very pale and calm, looking into the fire.

"Loisetette!"

She gave an almost imperceptible start, her colour rose slightly, and she turned her eyes on me for a moment—I could not tell whether in reproach or mere surprise—and then resumed her gaze on the fire.

"Miss Vane—are you still Miss Vane?"

"Yes."

"When—how long——?" I could not find words in which to put the question.

"When am I going to be married? you would ask," she said, with a calm that was almost rigid. "I am not going to be married. I have been jilted."

"*You* jilted, Loisetette!"

"Do you pity me? Don't. I am glad of it; glad, at least, to be free; glad that I have nothing to blame myself for, in obtaining my freedom. Long before I gained it I felt we had made a mistake, and while I was thinking of how I might suggest the idea to—him, he cut the knot by marrying a half-caste damsel with several lakhs of rupees. Though what sort of a fortune that may be, I have not the faintest conception." A faint gleam of the old sweet archness came across her face.

I bent forward, looking with all my heart in my eyes on the soft half-averted profile, watching the conscious blood rising slowly. I laid my hand on the little cold rigidly clasped hands; I felt them relaxing; gently my arm wound itself round her waist; her head dropped on my shoulder, nestled there, and was still.

So we sat, until the pony-carriage stopped at the gate. Mrs. Hamilton came in in a somewhat demonstrative manner. She glanced at Loisetette, then at me, and understood it all.

"So you bore my absence with what equanimity you might!" she said, lifting her bright face to mine, with a world of congratulation in her eyes. "*Now* you'll stay to dinner."

Loisetette turned and fled.

"God bless you, you dear woman!" I said.

"I never expected to be so glad to get rid of you as I was an hour ago."

"And God bless *you*! It was *you* I wanted for a brother all along. I always hated the notion of Loisetette marrying that man. Poor child, she did not know her own heart, and was persuaded into accepting him! If she had listened to me, she would have thrown him over long ago; but she was too conscientious while she thought he loved her. Perhaps it's better as it is? I will tell you something. She knows there is no mistake this time."

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